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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 7 October 2002**

**Lundi 7 octobre 2002**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 7 October 2002

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 7 octobre 2002

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** How ironic it is that today we celebrate Fire Prevention Week and on Friday a coroner's jury recommended that the city of greater Sudbury hire more full-time firefighters. So today, on behalf of the people I represent, on behalf of the constituents of the city of greater Sudbury, I ask the province to make a funding commitment earmarked to improve fire services in my great city.

There is absolutely no question that the inevitable consequence of downloading on to municipalities is the reduction of services. Tragically, in Sudbury there wasn't only a reduction of services because of amalgamation, there was also a loss of life. Clearly, three people lost their lives because this government didn't live up to its responsibilities. You shortchanged our municipality to the tune of \$10 million in amalgamation.

To hire the 18 firefighters we need to provide for safe communities is going to cost us \$1 million. We want you to live up to your responsibility, as the people who didn't provide sufficient resources for amalgamation, to come forward and give my municipality \$1 million so that we can hire the 18 firefighters that are so badly needed in my community.

There is only one response from you, and that is, "Yes, we'll do it today."

#### ONTARIO AGRICULTURE WEEK

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** I rise today to remind my fellow members that this is the fifth annual Ontario Agriculture Week and to invite them to join with me in celebrating Ontario's farmers.

I introduced the Ontario Agriculture Week Act as a private member's bill in 1998 to raise awareness of this industry upon which we all rely. Not only do we rely on Ontario farmers for safe, high-quality food, but as the second-largest industry in Ontario, our economy also relies heavily on agriculture. There are 67,000 farms in Ontario, which employ 650,000 Ontarians and contribute more than \$30 billion to Ontario's economy.

At this time, I'd like to draw the attention of this House to a number of visitors in the galleries. These visitors represent many agricultural commodity groups in our province and together form the Labour Issues Coordinating Committee, known as LICC for short. LICC came together 10 years ago to represent agriculture on labour-related issues.

Tomorrow I will be hosting an agriculture week breakfast, to which I have invited all MPPs and many agricultural leaders. Whether my fellow members can make the breakfast or not, I hope they will think of Ontario's hard-working farmers as they sit down to their meals this week, and I hope all members of this House will take the time to thank a farmer for the hard work they do.

#### ROCKTON WORLD'S FAIR

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** As the elected representative of the wonderful riding of Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot, I rise with a great sense of pride to acknowledge and celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Rockton World's Fair. Conceived in 1852 by the Beverley Agricultural Society as a one-day fair, the Rockton World's Fair now welcomes, over a four-day period, some 75,000 visitors each Thanksgiving weekend.

A very special event, the Rockton World's Fair combines agriculture, education and entertainment in a number of delightful ways. This year's theme, "Rooted in Agriculture ... Growing with the Community," speaks well to the dedication of the Rockton Agricultural Society and the hundreds of volunteers who each year help to ensure its success.

The Rockton fair brings a considerable boost to the local economy. This Thanksgiving weekend, even as we celebrate our fertile history of rural living and abundant farming, visitors to the fair will have the opportunity to feast on homemade pies, purchase handmade crafts and enjoy the many livestock competitions.

I call on all members of this assembly to join with me today in giving thanks for 150 wonderful years of caring and sharing; 150 years that mark with distinction and forever the Rockton World's Fair.

#### DIAMOND MINE

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** Members would know that a couple of weeks ago I rose and asked a question of the Deputy Premier in regard to the negotia-

tions between De Beers and Atawapiskat. Members would know, as the public does, that De Beers has pulled away from the table to negotiate an agreement that would see a winter exploration project go ahead in the community of Atawapiskat, in what would be the first diamond mine in the province of Ontario.

I asked the minister at that time to assist by making sure the province gets involved in this particular issue and to work with the community in order to assist the community to better prepare themselves for negotiations with De Beers.

Up to that point the government, quite frankly, had been nowhere to be seen when it came to dealing with the De Beers issue. In fact the community was quite frustrated that the province, which is responsible for natural resources issues in Ontario, was nowhere to be seen when it came to the difficulties they were having trying to negotiate an agreement with De Beers.

I am pleased to report to the House that indeed the government did listen to my suggestion, and for that I thank them. I note in conversations this morning with ministry staff in Timmins that they were on their way up to Atawapiskat this morning to work with the community to assist them in those negotiations, to advise them about the regulatory process—the permitting process—and to assist the community in whatever ways possible.

This is an important project, not only for Atawapiskat and the people there, but also for the mining community of Ontario. Let's hope these efforts will see renewed negotiations between De Beers and Atawapiskat.

#### ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** I rise in the House today to congratulate the St Vincent de Paul Society on the launching of an innovative new project to serve Ontario's rural and remote communities. Through its mobile store program, the St Vincent de Paul Society will be able to better help those in need.

I am pleased to say the project was launched last month in my riding of Durham. The Bowmanville conference unveiled the first large commercial truck trailer that will be retrofitted with a range of storage for food, clothing and household items. The objective is to eventually have a fleet of 25 mobile stores on the road.

I'd like to personally congratulate Nick Volk, provincial president of the St Vincent de Paul Society, and Mr Bob Burke, president of the St Joseph's Council of the society, on their new initiatives announced in Bowmanville. I would also like to recognize Norm Mackie of Mackie Van Lines for donating the trailer.

Fifteen students from St Stephen's Secondary School did an excellent job of repainting the trailer with St Vincent de Paul's new logo and colours. In fact a new St. Vincent de Paul Society conference is being organized at St Stephen's high school with the support of two teachers, Lou Pouwels and Deacon Gilbert Doddatto.

The Most Reverend Bishop James Doyle was present for the launching and blessing of the rural mobile store.

On September 28, St Vincent de Paul also opened its new value store in Bowmanville. This bright and clean shop will be an important addition to the services the local conference provides in Clarington.

This is one more way local volunteers are committed to helping their neighbours both locally and provincially. I express my support and thanks to all the volunteers in my riding who give of their time and faith to improve the lives of others.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain):** National Family Week begins today, and on behalf of Ontario families and the families on Hamilton Mountain I have been asked to tell you that they are struggling. Families are shocked as they open unbelievable hydro charges. These are hard-working men and women, seniors and individuals trying to make it on fixed incomes. One constituent writes:

"My hydro bill is double my highest-ever hydro bill. My youngest child has asthma. His doctor has told us to keep the air conditioning on during smog and humidex alerts; otherwise he will need to be admitted to the hospital."

Antonietta and Richard are currently living on sick benefits. Their hydro bill went from \$321 to \$644. They likened it to buying an appliance every other month. This is impossible, they say.

Paul suffers from emphysema, congestive heart failure and pulmonary fibrosis. He too requires air conditioning for health reasons. Paul receives ODSP. He believes he can no longer afford his home. He actually wonders if he can afford to rent.

#### 1340

Norma is an epileptic. She lives with her adult daughter who is physically and mentally challenged. Both need air conditioning for their epilepsy. Their bill has doubled.

Don's hydro increased by 67%. As a middle-income earner, he feels he's being strangled by the government.

Tanya, her husband and three children have lived in their home for five years. Their bill jumped from \$200 to \$900. "It's way too much," Tanya writes. She will be forced to go back to renting.

There are many more. I demand that the Premier intervene on behalf of Ontario families and protect them from these unjustified increases. I ask him at the very least to immediately issue the consumer rebates.

#### KYOTO PROTOCOL

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** I rise today to respond to Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal plan to support the implementation of the Kyoto accord.

The Liberals stated that they wished to debate Kyoto. First of all, the Liberals and Dalton McGuinty claim that the Kyoto accord will reduce smog in Ontario. Like most

Liberal facts, this is completely wrong. Kyoto will do nothing to reduce the number of smog days in Ontario. To say it will is simply inaccurate.

Kyoto is concerned primarily with climate change, not smog. The accord deals with carbon dioxide and is not part of the conventional provincial air quality regulations. To presume Kyoto will reduce smog in Ontario is incorrect.

To truly reduce smog in Ontario, the federal Liberal government must force the Americans to significantly reduce their smog outputs, which account for 90% of the pollutants in our air. Without a doubt, America is the prime polluter of Ontario's air. The Liberals know it and still refuse to act.

Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals claim that Kyoto will serve our province well. The facts speak for themselves. Many people agree that Kyoto will kill jobs in Ontario and Canada. Some estimate that it will send over 100,000 Ontario jobs to Mexico and the USA. Kyoto will also cause our hydro bills to dramatically increase, and it will force our gasoline prices to over \$1 per litre.

On Kyoto, on reducing smog, on killing jobs, Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals are quite simply wrong, wrong, wrong.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** Ontario Liberals are saddened and ashamed of this government and its ministers' abuse of power and privilege. They talk a good line about accountability, yet their actions speak to an arrogance and misuse of taxpayers' dollars that show a blatant disregard for accountability and ethical conduct.

First, there is the fact that under the Harris-Eves cabinet office expenses have increased by 119%. Then we have the incidents with ministers, their staffs' bar tabs and inappropriate expenses adding up to tens of thousands of dollars. The Harris-Eves government knowingly accepted this type of conduct until they were caught.

What makes this even more reprehensible is the fact that in my riding adult disabled children who can no longer be taken care of by aging parents have literally been abandoned at the steps of Community Living. Community Living has told me that they do not have the funds to take care of these most vulnerable people.

The scandal of abuse of ministerial expenses discredits all of us as members in this House, and the huge 119% increase in costs of cabinet office is proof that the Harris-Eves government has no limits when it comes to the public purse. The actions of cabinet members show that there is a terrible double standard in fiscal accountability in this government.

#### GREATER NIAGARA GENERAL HOSPITAL LADIES' AUXILIARY

**Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls):** It is a great pleasure today to rise in the House to congratulate the Greater

Niagara General Hospital ladies' auxiliary, for this year they are celebrating their 75th anniversary of service to our community.

The Ladies in Pink, as they are affectionately known, recently had a dinner to celebrate their anniversary. Thirty-nine-year member Peggy Johnston gave a brief history of the organization. Starting in 1927, they originally worked out of the Jepson Street Hospital. In those early years, they raised about \$400 annually, with which they bought hospital equipment such as baby bassinets, stretchers and wheelchairs.

These ladies have become the hospital foundation's best friends, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for a mammography unit, a gamma camera and an ultrasound sector scanner. Later, they contributed \$250,000 to the CAT scan campaign, much to the delight of then chairman, Peter Maves—around the same time that my mom, Paula Maves, who had a 25-year career with the auxiliary, was president of the auxiliary.

But to me and the thousands of Niagara citizens who have spent time in the hospital over the years, I believe their greatest contributions have been and continue to be the comfort they have offered to patients. I remember being a lonely, scared kid in the hospital. It was very comforting to look up and see the warm, friendly face of one of the ladies coming into my room, pushing the library cart, stopping to offer a book and some friendly conversation; seeing the ladies in the hall working with candystripers, a program they ran for many years, or being greeted at the hospital gift shop always gave one a warm feeling.

Thanks to all the ladies for their many contributions to the hospital over the years, but mostly thanks for all the comfort they have provided to all the patients of GNGH over 75 years. This is their greatest legacy.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Just before we begin, we have with us today in the Speaker's gallery His Excellency Daniel Leroy, the Belgian ambassador to Canada, and his wife; and Mr Frank Carruet, the Belgian Consul General in Toronto.

Please join me in welcoming our honoured guests.

Also in the Speaker's gallery today we have a delegation from Portugal led by Mr Laurentino Esteves, who is a member of the Portuguese Parliament.

Please join me in welcoming those honoured guests as well.

**Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Given the two different positions from the government we've heard on Kyoto, I seek unanimous consent to have an emergency debate on the Kyoto accord this evening.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### COLLISION REPAIR STANDARDS ACT, 2002

### LOI DE 2002 SUR LES NORMES DE RÉPARATION EN CAS DE COLLISION

Mr Sampson moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 186, An Act to further highway safety and establish consumer protection through the regulation of the collision repair industry, and to make a complementary amendment to the Insurance Act / Projet de loi 186, Loi visant à améliorer la sécurité sur les voies publiques et à protéger les consommateurs en réglementant le secteur de la réparation en cas de collision et à apporter une modification complémentaire à la Loi sur les assurances.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr Rob Sampson (Mississauga Centre):** The House has actually seen this bill before, sponsored by another member of this House who has now been elevated to cabinet. He and I actually worked very aggressively on the beginning of this bill and right through to this introduction now. It empowers the minister to establish a regulatory framework for the collision repair industry, including the certification and decertification of repair shops. It establishes a collision repair advisory board to perform an advisory function concerning the insurance industry to provide better protection for consumers. I know the member opposite will support that when the time comes this Thursday.

### AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEES PROTECTION ACT, 2002

### LOI DE 2002 SUR LA PROTECTION DES EMPLOYÉS AGRICOLES

Mrs Johns moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 187, An Act to protect the rights of agricultural employees / Projet de loi 187, Loi visant à protéger les droits des employés agricoles.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1350 to 1355.*

**The Speaker:** Would the members kindly take their seats.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted  
Baird, John R.  
Beaubien, Marcel

Gill, Raminder  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Hastings, John

O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Runciman, Robert W.

Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Brad  
Clement, Tony  
Coburn, Brian  
DeFaria, Carl  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Ecker, Janet  
Elliott, Brenda  
Flaherty, Jim  
Galt, Doug  
Gilchrist, Steve

Hodgson, Chris  
Johns, Helen  
Johnson, Bert  
Klees, Frank  
Maves, Bart  
Mazzilli, Frank  
McDonald, AL  
Molinari, Tina R.  
Munro, Julia  
Mushinski, Marilyn  
Newman, Dan

Sampson, Rob  
Sterling, Norman W.  
Stewart, R. Gary  
Stockwell, Chris  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Tsubouchi, David H.  
Wettlaufer, Wayne  
Wilson, Jim  
Witmer, Elizabeth  
Wood, Bob  
Young, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles  
Churley, Marilyn  
Hampton, Howard

Kormos, Peter  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martel, Shelley

Martin, Tony  
Prue, Michael

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 42; the nays are 8.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The government is writing legislation now with respect to privacy information which we have been briefed on by consumer groups that stakeholders outside have not been privy to.

With respect to this bill, it was received on our desks literally as the minister rose, which is normally the process. We voted against the NDP's original legislation in 1994. We voted with the government and we likely will in this case, but the fact is that we've discussed this issue about having legislation we have not been made privy to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member will know it's the standard practice for first reading. Members can vote for it and then I guess the most important one, how they vote is the final, third reading. We don't need any play-by-play.

**Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think that's probably why, by tradition in this House, first readings are always voted in favour of by all parties, just to avoid that kind of conflict.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I want to express this party's gratitude to the minister who sponsored this bill for ensuring that I got a copy of the bill and the compendium at the same time that the other opposition party did, in time to read the compendium and enough sections of the bill, including the clear references to mere association, to enable us to vote against it. I appreciate it.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The Minister of Agriculture just introduced a bill on employment protection. I'm wondering: you recorded the number of yeas and nays, but did you record that no Liberal voted for this bill? They abstained. I think that should be recorded.

**The Speaker:** I think the member knows full well how we record votes, ayes and nays.

The minister for a short statement.

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food):**

I'm going to defer until ministers' statements because I'm so shocked that the Liberals voted against this. I can't believe it.

MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT  
(SIMCOE DAY), 2002  
LOI DE 2002 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES MUNICIPALITÉS  
(FÊTE DE SIMCOE)

Mr Gilchrist moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 188, An Act to amend the Municipal Act, 2001 to name Civic Holiday as Simcoe Day / Projet de loi 188, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités en vue de désigner le Congé civique sous le nom de fête de Simcoe.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member for a short statement?

**Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East):** This bill is an exact copy of the bill I introduced in the 36th Parliament. It seeks to add some British history flavour to the recognition of civic holiday, a name that's fairly innocuous. Many of us in this chamber believed in the 36th Parliament that it was appropriate in those municipalities that recognized a civic holiday in August that they refer to it by the name Simcoe Day in recognition of John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant Governor of what is now the province of Ontario.

#### VISITORS

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I want to point out to the House that today we are joined by a group of parents and their sons and daughters. They will be paying close attention to the proceedings of the House. They are here in the west gallery.

#### MOTIONS

##### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader):** I move that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Monday, October 7, Tuesday, October 8 and Thursday, October 10, 2002, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1403 to 1408.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Elliott, Brenda	Newman, Dan
Arnott, Ted	Flaherty, Jim	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Galt, Doug	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Parsons, Ernie
Beaubien, Marcel	Gilchrist, Steve	Patten, Richard
Bountrogianni, Marie	Gill, Raminder	Peters, Steve
Boyer, Claudette	Hardeman, Ernie	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Hastings, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Brown, Michael A.	Hodgson, Chris	Ramsay, David
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Runciman, Robert W.
Caplan, David	Johns, Helen	Ruprecht, Tony
Chudleigh, Ted	Johnson, Bert	Sampson, Rob
Clark, Brad	Kennedy, Gerard	Sergio, Mario
Cleary, John C.	Klees, Frank	Sorbara, Greg
Clement, Tony	Kwinter, Monte	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Stewart, R. Gary
Colle, Mike	Levac, David	Stockwell, Chris
Crozier, Bruce	Maves, Bart	Tascona, Joseph N.
Curling, Alvin	Mazzilli, Frank	Tsubouchi, David H.
DeFaria, Carl	McDonald, AL	Turnbull, David
Di Cocco, Caroline	McLeod, Lyn	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	Molinari, Tina R.	Witmer, Elizabeth
Dunlop, Garfield	Munro, Julia	Wood, Bob
Ecker, Janet	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley	
Kormos, Peter	Martin, Tony	

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 75; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### AGRICULTURAL LABOUR POLICY

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** A few minutes ago, I introduced for first reading the proposed Agricultural Employees Protection Act, 2002. I was surprised that the Liberals abstained from this vote. This bill represents a commitment to agricultural employees all across the province of Ontario. It represents a commitment to family farms in the province, and it represents a commitment to the rural way of life in Ontario.

This important piece of legislation has been supported by my colleagues at the Ministries of Labour and of the Attorney General, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their co-operation and guidance on this critical issue.

I want to assure the agricultural sector that we remain committed to ensuring that our labour relations response takes into account agriculture's special concerns. This government will work to protect farmers and their livelihoods in what have proven to be challenging times. Ontario's farm families must not be vulnerable to the risks of potentially devastating labour disruptions. At the same time, we do, and we will, respect individual and constitutional rights. We believe we have struck an appropriate balance with the bill we have introduced today. We have advanced the meaningful association rights of employees while protecting Ontario's agricultural sector from the risk of potentially devastating labour disruptions.

The legislation complies with the Supreme Court of Canada decision regarding the rights of agricultural workers to associate. That decision requires Ontario to provide legislative protection of the rights of agricultural workers to form and maintain associations as guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Supreme Court of Canada clearly defines this issue, and it's about freedom of association.

The proposed legislation takes a balanced approach. It will recognize the rights of agricultural workers to associate, while having regard to the unique characteristics of farming. The proposed Agricultural Employees Protection Act is a significant advance in facilitating employee-employer relationships.

This bill would meet the requirements of the Supreme Court decision by providing legislative protection for the rights of all agricultural workers who wish to form and join an employees' association, to participate in lawful activities of an employees' association, to assemble, and to make representations to the employer through the association regarding the terms and conditions of their employment.

The proposed legislation also requires the employer to acknowledge such representation, and it protects agricultural employees against interference, coercion and discrimination in the exercise of their rights.

In August and September of this year, Ministry of Agriculture and Food staff consulted with those parties who may be affected by this new legislation. These included members of the agricultural community, employers, and representatives of organized labour.

Ontario's agricultural employers told us that they believed they already have a good relationship with their employees, a relationship that they value and wish to maintain. We heard that it was important to treat all agricultural employees in a consistent manner. But we also heard that Ontario's crop planting and harvesting must not be vulnerable to the risk of potentially devastating labour disruptions. We heard that Ontario's farm operations must be protected.

We promised to do that in this spring's throne speech, and we're doing it here today. The government will work with the farm industry and other stakeholders, including labour, to put in place this legislation. I repeat: this legislation not only protects all agricultural employees,

but it also recognizes the unique characteristics of the agricultural sector and Ontario's farming operations.

The government has worked hard to enhance the competitiveness and viability of the province's agricultural sector since 1995, and we will continue to take action to strengthen this critical sector of our economy.

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** With the change that occurred in the minister's speech, I'm going to have to change my speech a little bit.

I think it is important to reinforce—and I'd like to know what school of politics the minister went to. Since when is an abstention a "no" vote? That is not the case. I think you should go back to school, Minister, and learn a little more about politics.

We didn't vote against this bill. We voted against the bill in 1994, and we supported the repeal of this legislation in 1995. But this is too important an issue; this is an issue that is supposed to be there to protect Ontario farmers. This party treats farmers with respect, not like this government. It's not proper to just give a bill the once-over and say yea or nay to it. I think the minister should be extremely disappointed to do that.

You talk about protecting farmers. Well, boy oh boy, has this government lost their—

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Touch with reality.

**Mr Peters:** You have not protected farmers in this province. You talk here, Minister, about strengthening "the competitiveness and viability of the province's agricultural sector since 1995." What a joke. We've seen cuts to the agricultural budget, closure of the extension offices. We've seen massive budget cuts. We've seen cuts to the University of Guelph and the OMAFRA agreement. We've seen service providers being privatized. We've seen constant knee-jerk reactions from this government.

Did we see this government being proactive when it came to nutrient management? No, it took a tragedy. They were reactive.

When dealing with food safety issues, did you see this government being proactive? No, they were reactive again.

Here we are again—reactive. You're not being proactive.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Peters:** Well, if you'd shut your—keep your tone down a little bit, that would be very helpful.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Member, take his seat. Members, come to order. I'd appreciate if you wouldn't use that—and the members on this side, please come to order. I don't need to stand up.

The member for Elgin-Middlesex-London may continue.

**Mr Peters:** I think what we're seeing here is the good old, typical Tory platform: stand up on that manure spreader and let 'er rip. That's what you guys are doing.

We do support this bill going to committee, because this is too important to the farmers who are sitting here, the farmers who are sitting at home right now, for those



farmers who are out on their combines right now. This is important to them. It's irresponsible to drop a piece of legislation down and say to vote for it.

1420

This is a piece of legislation that needs to go to committee. We need to go through a full clause-by-clause to make sure you haven't put something through on this bill, because we've seen that track record. This is a government that stands up and loves to say, "Promises made, promises kept," but I'll tell you, you have abandoned the agricultural community. You've abandoned the rural communities. But all of a sudden you've seen the light. Look at what has happened in the year 2002 alone. All of a sudden there's the minister handing out Healthy Futures cheques left and right, because you know that you're vulnerable out there.

But you had a Premier stand up at the International Plowing Match in September and talk about what the government is going to do. Where are those cheques? Those farmers need those cheques. They're still at home.

It goes on and on, how this government has hurt agriculture. We want to make sure that this government is not in any way hurting agriculture. We want to make sure that this is a piece of legislation that truly does protect the interests of farmers and recognizes the unique characteristics of a farming operation. But this government's track record of protecting farmers is not worth a damn—a darn; pardon me. I apologize for that, Mr Speaker.

Look at the issues right now. You've got farmers out there harvesting their soybeans with 25% to 50% of those beans green. Crop insurance won't give those farmers an answer. You're just going to sit back and sit on your hands and hope everything works out.

This party is not going to sit back and be reactive. We're going to be proactive. We're going to make sure that this is a good piece of legislation. Speaker, I know they think that I speak a little too loudly, but you know what? You guys have so much manure in your ears that you need to be spoken to loudly. You haven't looked after farmers; you've abandoned farmers in this province. I think the time has come and the farmers have seen through what you've been doing.

We look forward to this going to committee. I'm confident that we will be supporting this bill at second reading, but we'll pass that judgment when we get it through committee.

**Hon David Turnbull (Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask for unanimous consent to give the last speaker another five minutes to bury himself.

**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? I heard some noes.

Further responses?

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** An oh, so fundamental quality and characteristic of any true democracy is that that democracy ensure that its workers, women and men who work in our factories, in our retail

sector, underground in our mines and, yes, those working women and men who work hard harvesting crops and in our new agribusinesses—a fundamental quality and characteristic of any democracy is that those workers have the right to join trade unions and the right to collectively bargain.

A failure to advance and defend that right is a failure to advance and defend the interests of democracy, and it is an abandonment of principles that make democracy something more than mere theory but translated, interpreted into something that's meaningful for the lives of women and men in that society.

This isn't a lengthy piece of legislation. It didn't take long for us to digest its content. It will be revealed at the end of the day, should this legislation pass, that the so-called rights accorded agricultural workers in this bill are no more than the rights that this government gave to victims of crime in its Victims' Bill of Rights.

It is imperative that if we are going to stop the murder and maiming of agricultural workers in that workplace, they have the right to form trade unions and belong to them, that they have the right to collectively bargain. I call upon people in this Legislature and beyond to please read the judgment of the Supreme Court of Canada in the Dunmore decision. I'll not make frequent references to it, because I don't have time, but the comments by then-Justice L'Heureux-Dubé are most telling. It is clear in her judgment that it cannot be argued that Ontario agriculture has unique characteristics that are incompatible with legislated collective bargaining.

This has nothing to do with an attack on the family farm. The Supreme Court judgment that was provided made it clear that the nature of farming has changed dramatically in this province and in this country, that the focus of efforts to organize and collectively bargain are in the arena of the new corporate farm, the agribusinesses.

I want to pay tribute right now to the United Food and Commercial Workers for their leadership in litigating this government's repeal of NDP legislation which provided for and accommodated and ensured the right of agricultural workers to organize and, yes, achieved a balance between those workers' rights and the acknowledged interests of the agricultural industry in making sure crops are grown and harvested.

This government today leaves people in shock and outrage, and I tell you that should this government pursue this bill, it will have embarked upon a battle the likes of which it has not seen in its seven years in office.

I have been visiting trade unionists and their locals across this province in the public sector and in the private sector, and every single one of those trade unions and their membership are committed to ensuring that their sisters and brothers in the agricultural industry—working women and men—have the same rights as they do to join unions and collectively bargain. And they will be joining with those women and men in the agricultural industry in their pursuit of free collective bargaining rights so that they can enjoy some of the same rights other workers

have won: the right to ensure safer workplaces; the right to protect themselves against unsafe, dangerous, indeed deadly, poisonous and toxic workplaces; the right to refuse unsafe work. And part and parcel of that is the right to be contained within the scope and ambit of the Employment Standards Act in this province, be they workers in the mushroom factories, be they chicken catchers in barns across this province, be they women and men who work hard with their backs and with their bodies. I tell you, there will be solidarity and there will be a fight the likes of which this government has not seen.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### SLOT MACHINES

**Mr Monte Kwinter (York Centre):** My question is to the Attorney General. On Friday night, TVO's Fourth Reading revealed that they have obtained a copy of a highly confidential cabinet minute. Interestingly, it was the cabinet minute detailing cabinet's decision to move forward with up to 800 slots at Picov Downs, a decision, by the way, that you have said is yet to be made, but I'll get to that in a minute.

Attorney General, there are a limited number of people who could have had access to that confidential document. Most of them sit around the cabinet table. Some of those cabinet colleagues are strongly in favour of these slots; others are absolutely opposed. Have you ordered a police investigation to find out which of your cabinet colleagues illegally leaked this document and, if not, why not?

**Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs):** Indeed, there was a document that was produced on a television show last week, which the interviewer suggested was from a cabinet meeting. I'm not going to comment one way or another on whether it was or wasn't. Indeed, what happens in cabinet with this government—when the Liberals were in power, when the New Democrats were in power—stays within the cabinet chamber and that's the way it will remain.

1430

**Mr Kwinter:** The television show showed the document with the cabinet number. There is no question that it was a cabinet document.

While the cabinet was considering a very important decision about Picov Downs, Mr Picov was busy writing cheques. He wrote one for \$80,000 to the leadership campaign of Jim Flaherty. He wrote another for \$10,000 to the campaign of Ernie Eves.

Despite the fact that Picov Downs, on their economic record, should be eligible for about one or two slot machines, the cabinet approved up to 800.

Attorney General, apparently we are not the only ones who have been questioning the cabinet's handling of

Picov Downs. TVO's Fourth Reading reported that the Premier himself questioned the link between large donations and this cabinet decision. It was reported that he openly criticized Mr Flaherty's and Mr Hudak's actions and said, "I am not a" expletive deleted "crook." Despite those words, neither he nor you have reversed the cabinet decision. Why not?

**Hon Mr Young:** Once again, anything that happens within a cabinet chamber remains in the cabinet chamber, and you know that. That's not going to change, nor should it change.

What I will tell you, though, because you've raised the issue of Picov Downs again, is that that track has applied for slot machines. Their application is going through the normal process. It's going through the same process that 16 other tracks have gone through. No decision has been made to date as to how many slot machines will be placed at that track. Indeed, the use of the term "up to 800" means just that: up to 800. It could be one, two, 200, 400.

**Mr Kwinter:** Mr Minister, it was reported that neither the deputy minister responsible nor the head of the gaming commission would back your decision. To make matters even worse, we now know that the only reason Mr Picov gave \$10,000 to Mr Eves was because Janet Ecker's bagman asked for it on her behalf—a tough request to say no to when you have a multimillion-dollar proposal before the cabinet.

We need a police investigation into the leak. While we're at it, I think they should investigate the actions of Mr Flaherty, Mrs Ecker and Mr Hudak. As Attorney General, will you now do the right thing and refer these very serious allegations to the assistant Deputy Attorney General for criminal law? Will you do that today?

**Hon Mr Young:** If you have any allegations that you believe support a criminal investigation, I would encourage you, sir, to put those in writing and forward them to the police or to me, and they will follow the normal course.

What is not helpful is for you to stand in the Legislature day after day, week after week, and take different stands and try to find different reasons to support what you said last week or the week before. For instance, the week before last, you said that Picov Downs should get one and a half slot machines. You were quite emphatic about that. Last week, you stood in the Legislature and said in no uncertain terms that I should make a decision on the spot and give them 100 slot machines. You're inconsistent in your approach to this.

We are consistent. We are saying that what will happen here is what happened at all of the other tracks. It will be an independent, impartial process that will, at the end of the day, be one that we can all look back on and agree came to the right conclusion.

## MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

**Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Last week, the Premier told

the Legislature the following: "My total expenses were—and this includes members of my staff, I believe—\$104,111.42 over six years, made up of \$85,161.98 for travel and \$18,949.44 for accommodation and meals over a six-year period of time." That's strange, because we are still going through the pile, and we've already found \$34,478 for food and accommodation, almost double what Ernie Eves told this House. That's the running total so far.

My question to the Deputy Premier is this: why did the Premier say that he and his staff spent just under \$19,000 on food and accommodation when we have proof that the number is well over \$34,000?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** I understand that the Chair of Management Board has been involved in this, and he will respond.

**Hon David H. Tsubouchi (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture):** I haven't been involved with it, but I will answer the question.

We recognize that the current system, which has been in place under both the Liberal and NDP regimes, is outdated. In June, the Premier asked me to make a review of the guidelines to ensure that this system would hold up to the scrutiny of the public and bring forward the best and highest integrity possible.

We are in the process right now of drafting a new code of conduct. I will say this, though, with respect to the Premier, and this is the only part I am going to get involved in with his particular expenses: the Premier has provided copies of his receipts, as I understand, today. That goes well beyond what is required under the guidelines. You know the leader certainly holds himself up to a high standard. I will expect and hope that both leaders over there, of the Liberals and of the NDP, when we look at transparency and accountability, will promote their own parties being subject to the same rules and the same scrutiny and transparency as everyone.

**Mrs Pupatello:** Minister, I am having a page take over a series of claims to you. I'd like you to have a look at that and I would like to ask you this. On page 1 of what I've attached is a bill from a New York hotel for \$1,506. Page 2 shows \$3,800 for a hotel bill in London, England, and a \$599 bill from Frankfurt, Germany. Page 3 shows \$1,500 from a stay in Paris. The next page shows more than \$1,000 in meals and hotel bills.

The Premier says that he and his staff spent only \$18,000 on meals and hotels. We have already uncovered over \$34,000 in meals and hotels. Chair of Management Board, Ernie Eves understated his food and hotel expenses by at least 82%. The question for the public: can we trust anything this Premier says? Why should we believe what Ernie Eves said in this House when we find there is actually proof to the contrary? We believe it's important that the Premier—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** The member's time is up. The Chair of Management Board.

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** I wish the member would stop mixing both the individual expenses of the Premier and

those of his entire staff. Certainly you are trying to mix things up. Clearly, the truth has been given in terms of the receipts.

Every day I listen to the members over there say, "Dalton McGuinty thinks this and Dalton McGuinty thinks that," but he's not saying that. Let's listen to what the real Dalton McGuinty says. In a scrum on October 4 the question was to Dalton McGuinty: "Just give us your receipts." He said, "What I have is a summary of my expenses and I'm ... prepared to make that public"—just the summary. Let's go on. Question: "Would you also release the expenses of your staff members?" Answer: "Why would I do that?" Dalton McGuinty goes on. Question: "Why won't you make your staff expenses includable?" McGuinty says, "I'm prepared to make my personal expenses public." "Why not your staff?" "Well, it's not up to my staff to ah..." That's his answer.

**Mrs Pupatello:** On Friday we showed that the Premier filed more than \$8,000 in expense claims without any receipts. One of the claims includes the note, "The secretary to the minister says that she doesn't attach receipts for the minister." That violates your own ministerial guidelines, which seem fairly clear to everyone else. They state that claims must be supported with documentation for major items of expenditure such as accommodation, transportation, meals and incidentals. After this was exposed, and after several days, we just received a host of receipts. We don't know that they total \$8,000 and we can see why the Premier did not want this included in the first place.

A couple of questions for you, Chair of Management Board: one, why would these receipts not be included when they should have been, as it's required under the freedom of information act? Secondly, it's no wonder he didn't want to include them. He's been at Bigliardi's so many times that he gets a statement; he doesn't get the bill.

**The Speaker:** Member's time is up.

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** She said there were two questions, and one is answered already.

Let's go back to visit the real Dalton McGuinty here. In that same scrum of October 4—

*Interjections.*

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** You want to hear this, folks. This is important: "Under the rules we play by today"—this is McGuinty—"we get \$3.5 million..." it says here, folks. That's your \$3.5 million. He says, "Put it all into supper ... if you want, all into salary, if you want, put it all into polls, put it all into expensive luggage." This is unbelievable. Dalton McGuinty and his Louis Vuitton baggage—luggage. I guess this brings a whole new meaning to "bagman."

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: when I said that Mr Tsubouchi had been involved, I was simply indicating that he has been asked to do some rigorous accounting in order to improve the rules—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon Mr Tsubouchi:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: to the Minister of Education, I was just jesting.

1440

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Last week, as people across Ontario got their sky-high electricity bills, your Premier said he'd make sure hydro consumers get a hydro bill rebate and also make sure the rebate is not reduced. He said he would overrule the application by Ontario Power Generation that asks the Ontario Energy Board to reduce the—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Sorry to interrupt the member. To the Minister for Transportation, the Minister of the Environment and the member for Windsor West: I can't hear the questions. If you want to carry on the conversations, please go outside. You've asked your questions.

I apologize to the leader of the third party.

**Mr Hampton:** The Premier said he'd make sure that people get their hydro electricity rebate. Minister, my question to you is: you make the laws; will you change the law now to ensure all hydro consumers get their rebate and that it's a full rebate?

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I think what the Premier said last week was that consumers in Ontario, be they working families or free enterprises, would receive the rebate from Ontario Power Generation exactly as it was advertised, and I agree.

**Mr Hampton:** The problem here is that you make the law, and the law you made allows that rebate to be reduced. The law you made says that if Ontario Power Generation sells off or leases some of their assets, like the Bruce nuclear station, then people's hydro electricity rebate can be reduced. You made that law, not the Ontario Energy Board, so stop trying to blame someone else. Change the law now so that people can get their full hydro rebate.

**Hon Mr Baird:** I strongly share the Premier's view that the rebate should be delivered exactly as advertised. The entire purpose of the rebate is to recognize that one market participant, Ontario Power Generation, having such a huge percentage share of the market, has a tremendous amount of control. The market design committee, in the recommendations they made to the government a good number of years ago, said that in recognition of that control, they should pay a rebate to customers based on their share of the market. That's exactly what was said, and that's exactly what will be delivered.

**Mr Hampton:** Last week it was the Ontario Energy Board's fault and this week it's something called the market design committee that's at fault. These are your laws. If hydro consumers across this province have their hydro bill rebate reduced, it will be because of the law you made, because you made a law that allows that to happen.

My question to you is, will you do the smart thing and change the law now so that people get their hydro rebate now, and then will you cancel this whole hydro privatization and deregulation fiasco before it puts the boots to more consumers?

**Hon Mr Baird:** The rebate obligation on Ontario Power Generation is contained right in their operating licence, so I don't seek to blame or shuffle responsibility on that to anyone. I will say to the leader of the third party that I may disagree with him on this issue but at least I can respect him.

Someone recently sent me a copy of a letter that was sent out by Richard King and Sean Conway, which reads, "Throughout Ontario's electricity restructuring process, Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals have been consistent supporters of the move to an open electricity market in Ontario." Further in the letter they say, please send us \$350. Most interesting.

#### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Minister of Health. Ontario needs at least 588 more family doctors. There are about 3,000 foreign-trained doctors in Ontario who want to work but can't because they don't have Ontario qualifications. Through your so-called fast-track assessment process, with 3,000 foreign-trained doctors to work with, your government only managed to fill three of 10 training spots for family physicians. What an embarrassment.

The problem is your criteria. The measure of a good doctor should not be whether they have been in practice for the last two years or where they were trained; it should be whether they are competent and good doctors. My question is, what are you doing to ensure that these family doctor training spots in the fast-track assessment process are filled and continue to be filled so that Ontario communities can get the physicians they desperately need?

**Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** The honourable member probably has the right intention at heart, but the fact of the matter is that the program of which he speaks was directly created to recognize foreign-trained professionals who also have some clinical expertise. We're giving them fast-track certification—maximum six-month certification—because they not only have training in a foreign medical institution but have had clinical experience in other countries. That is what we're recognizing. That's why it's fast-track. Indeed, the program is now fully subscribed, with 40 individuals a year, which was the intention of the program in the first place.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Supplementary?

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** We can do more to use the skills of international medical graduates here. You see, the NDP government in Manitoba has an assessment program too. It evaluates the medical knowledge and clinical expertise of international medical graduates in three days. If successful, those graduates

immediately register with the college of physicians and surgeons. They get a conditional licence, and then they practise with a practice adviser who is a licensed physician. The program has the full support of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba and the faculty of medicine at the University of Manitoba. In contrast, here in Ontario international medical graduates must wait three to six months to be assessed and then, if they are successful, can obtain a licence to practise.

The Manitoba model is working for international graduates and patients. When will you introduce a similar program here?

**Hon Mr Clement:** The honourable member knows I have stated publicly that despite the fact we have made tremendous improvements, tripling the number of international medical graduates who are considered every year, I believe more can be done. and perhaps the honourable member will be pleased in the near future.

I find it passing strange, however, that it is this political party whose former leader, Bob Rae, on one of the few occasions he admitted he actually made a mistake—this was one of the occasions. Before a public audience he indicated that one of the things he regrets most about his time in office—I thought there would be more than one, and perhaps this is a good place to start—was the contraction of our medical schools, the reduction of the number of physicians who are trained in this province, which created the problem in the first place. I take it from the honourable members that perhaps they've had a change of heart.

#### OAK RIDGES MORAINE

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I have a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. On June 27 this year, with this document, you signed a minister's zoning order, unprecedented in the history of Ontario, ordering the town of Richmond Hill to allow developers to build over 8,000 homes smack dab in the middle of the Oak Ridges moraine. Despite your empty promises to protect the moraine, this decree forces Richmond Hill to approve 8,000 homes for a few developers in the heart of the moraine without having to go through the normal process. By signing this ministerial order, you have virtually given, with the stroke of a pen, these same developers a certified cheque. Basically, you gave them a virtual cheque of \$300 million. If that wasn't enough, now you're proceeding with another scheme to give these same developers more compensation with your land swap in Seaton and Pickering.

My question to you is, why should we be further compensating these same developers with public lands in Seaton and north Pickering when you have already given them the right to build 8,000 homes right in the moraine without any approvals needed? Why do we have to give them more?

1450

**Hon Chris Hodgson (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** My question to the honourable member

is, where have you been? This was all approved by David Crombie's negotiated settlement, the Crombie accord, to create a robust corridor through the Niagara Escarpment, and Richmond Hill.

The panel that was representative of environmentalists, business leaders, developers and municipal leaders came up with recommendations to protect the Oak Ridges moraine. They realized you needed this corridor that had been fought about and was presently before the OMB. They suggested that we appoint David Crombie to negotiate a settlement to that. This was part of that settlement: they would create about a 1,000-acre urban park in Richmond Hill and the remaining lands, which were before the board for settlement, be allowed with certainty to be settled. That was part of the Crombie accord or settlement. You were aware of that.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Minister, you know full well that the whole battle over the Oak Ridges moraine was to stop the building of 8,000 homes on Yonge Street in Richmond Hill and on Leslie. That's what the battle was about.

Everybody thought when we brought in the conservation act that those 8,000 homes were stopped, but what you did in the dead of night is that you—not Mr Crombie, by ministerial order, which I have right here, said to these developers, "Forget conserving the moraine. Build 8,000 homes smack dab up Jefferson forest, right by Bond Lake."

How does that protect the moraine when right in the middle you allowed them to build 8,000 homes? Now you're going to give them how many more thousands in Seaton and north Pickering? How many more are you going to give them when you already allowed them to build in the middle of the moraine? Tell me that, Mr Minister.

**Hon Mr Hodgson:** If that's the brain trust in the Liberal Party, you're totally confused. This has been the most transparent process. We've created a 1,000-acre park, a robust corridor—

*Interjection.*

**Hon Mr Hodgson:** It is, and you can ask David Crombie. The maps were public. And your numbers are wrong as well. So if you need a full briefing on this, I can set one up with Mr Crombie. He can go through it with you in detail, with the maps that you approved and voted for in this House.

#### HIGHWAY 6

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** My question is for the Minister of Transportation and it concerns Highway 6. Highway 6 is an essential corridor in my riding of Waterloo-Wellington. For much of the county of Wellington, it's a key route to the 401, our access to the North American market. It's crucial to our local economy.

In the summer, Wellington county council passed a resolution about Highway 6. They have addressed it to the Minister of Transportation. They say that Highway 6 from Fergus to Mount Forest—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Come to order, please. The member for Waterloo-Wellington has the floor. Sorry for the interruption.

**Mr Arnott:** I couldn't hear myself think for the opposition.

They say that Highway 6 from Fergus to Mount Forest needs review so that repairs to that section can be done as soon as possible. As the MPP for Wellington in the early 1990s, I raised the need for repairs to Highway 6 repeatedly in this Legislature from my place on the opposition benches. I called for the construction of passing lanes, an idea that was brought forward by my predecessor, Jack Johnson, before he retired in 1990.

Will the minister inform the House whether, in fact, a review of the need to fix Highway 6 is underway?

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation):** As this member points out—and he points out very often to me the needs in his particular area of Waterloo-Wellington—Highway 6 is very important to that part of our province. We're not only studying this, we are now in the design stages for the repair and repavement of Highway 6 from Fergus to Kenilworth.

We're not only dealing with this particular piece of highway, we're dealing with some others. When we have completed all the work that is presently under design for Highway 6, we will have spent some \$9 million on Highway 6. The good people of Wellington county can thank the member from their area for putting this issue on the table.

**Mr Arnott:** I want to thank the minister for his response, his compliments and for any action taken to see that Highway 6 from Fergus to Mount Forest is a priority.

After I repeatedly raised the need for construction on Highway 6 in the 1990s, the NDP government initiated a study and it concluded that the work needed to be done. Passing lanes were built from the city of Guelph to Fergus and Highway 6 was four-laned from the northern city limits of Guelph to county road 7.

I want to inform the minister and the House of my firm belief that we need passing lanes from Fergus to Mount Forest. County council has resolved that any studies required must begin immediately in order to get this needed work going as soon as possible. The work has been done as far as Fergus, and I say the time is now to finish the job right through to Mount Forest.

Will the minister agree to move forward with reconstruction on Highway 6 so that the work can be done as soon as possible?

**Hon Mr Sterling:** This government has spent unprecedented amounts of money on our highway improvements across this province: \$6.5 billion on highways since 1995. This not only includes four-lane highways, this includes two-lane highways like Highway 6.

We were glad to respond to the member's request prior to 1999 in putting some passing lanes on Highway 6. We realize that this is a very busy highway. There are safety concerns, and we're continuing to look for improvements in that area. I hope to discuss this and

other matters that are important to this member for the improvement of Highway 6 when we meet later this week to go over all of the priorities in your riding.

## SCHOOL SAFETY

**Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East):** A question for the Minister of Education. Minister, two weeks ago a man entered Fenside Public School in my riding of Don Valley East through the child care entrance, approached five young girls in the stairwell, and grabbed two of them by the wrist. Fortunately, the girls broke free and ran for help.

This is the latest in a growing list of incidents where trespassers are entering schools and coming after our children. I believe we should make video surveillance cameras available if a school or school board determines the need. However, we all know that school boards don't have the money it would take to have video surveillance systems. Sergeant Dave Colwell of the Toronto police sex crimes unit said, "In this case and in others, yes, it probably would have been more beneficial to have video cameras in the schools."

So, Minister, my question for you is this: what is it going to take for you to act? Does a child have to be molested, maimed, or even killed before you adopt a safe school package like the one proposed by Dalton McGuinty?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** I'm pleased to see that the opposition has finally recognized what we recognized a long time ago, and that was the need to provide a safe school environment for all of the students in the province of Ontario.

Perhaps the member wants to recall the fact that in 2000 we did introduce the Safe Schools Act, and it did give teachers, principals and boards authority in order that they could move forward. I also would like the member to know that on September 1, 2001, the government passed the access-to-school-premises regulation. It does give principals the authority to determine who is allowed on school property. As well, the pupil accommodation grant presently does allow the schools to pay for health and safety issues such as the surveillance cameras.

**Mr Caplan:** Minister, that is frankly a bizarre answer. You can pass all the laws and regulations you want, but our schools are not safe from intruders in these kinds of incidents. Even Guy Giorno agrees with me. When he wrote in yesterday's Toronto Star, he said, "I happen to like McGuinty's proposal for surveillance cameras in out-of-the-way places." He continues, "The recent assaults at Fenside Public School highlight the need."

The time for consideration, frankly, is over. It's now time for action. I made a statement in this House back in June; no response from you. I sent you a copy of a safe school survey with the view of all of the schools in Don Valley East; again, no response. Dalton McGuinty raised this issue with you five months ago and you've done nothing.

So, Minister, on behalf of all residents of Don Valley East, especially the hundreds of parents who attended an emergency meeting last week at Fenside Public School, I ask you again, what horrible tragedy has to happen before you do something, anything, to protect the students in our schools? Either implement the Dalton McGuinty safe school—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Order. The member's time is up. Minister?

1500

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** I'm pleased to hear that the member opposite has become such a fan of Guy Giorno.

I will just let you know that certainly some of the happenings such as tough new curriculum, new guidelines for testing that have been introduced—they were all part of our plan. The Safe Schools Act was part of our plan too. It's interesting to see your party just recently recognizing what we have known for seven years: people in this province want safe schools, they want a tough curriculum, they want testing for students and they want to make sure that we provide the best learning environment for the students in this province. We're doing exactly that.

#### FEDERAL TAXATION

**Mr AL McDonald (Nipissing):** My question is for the Minister of Finance. This September, the federal government announced that it will require Ontario to pay back \$1.3 billion for the personal tax error made by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. It seems odd, Minister, that these tax errors were made between 1997 and 1999 and had gone undetected by the provincial government.

I also note that Ontario is being made to pay for a federal tax error that occurred after the 1996 provincial budget, where it was reported that the Ministry of Finance was able to obtain additional information from the federal government to improve Ontario's capability in revenue forecasting.

Minister, could you please explain today why this enormous error went unnoticed despite the 1996 claim that the Ontario finance staff had strengthened contacts with the federal forecasting staff and successfully obtained additional provincial income tax information—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I'm afraid the member's time is up. Minister?

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Finance):** I thank the honourable member from Nipissing for the question. As former Finance Minister Paul Martin said, and the current Finance Minister, John Manley, said, this error was the sole responsibility of the federal government, which does collect income tax on behalf of the provinces. It was signed off in public accounts by their auditor, who said that taxes had been remitted correctly.

Notwithstanding its responsibility for this overpayment, though, they are asking that Ontario taxpayers pay for the federal mistake. We do think that is unfair. But we also recognize the need to ensure that the system does not

do this again to any province. I know the honourable members out there don't seem to think that \$1.3 billion out of this province is a problem. If they would like to say to the schools and hospitals around here, "Live with \$1.3 billion less," let them say so, because that is what the Liberal Party's position is currently.

We have made some changes with Ottawa to improve this but we still need a more accountable tax system—

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Finance's time is up.

**Mr McDonald:** Minister, thank you for your answer, but I'm sure that many taxpayers in Ontario would appreciate some assurance that this type of error not occur again. Could you please describe your efforts to ensure the federal government enhances its accountability with respect to the tax processing system.

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** Despite the fact that the federal accounts were validated by two finance ministers and by the federal auditor, Ontario taxpayers are still left with a \$1.3-billion mistake that they are being expected to pay back, and we don't think that's fair.

We've insisted and asked for a new accountability mechanism. Officials were speaking with finance officials this week to make sure that all provinces could depend on the numbers that are coming from Ottawa. They're their numbers; we are not in a position to check them without the information. We want an agreement to make sure that all the provinces can do this so that taxpayers in this province are not put in this situation ever again.

#### COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To the Deputy Premier: at the age of 18, Velma Demerson was torn from her Toronto home, hauled before a judge and, with no charge ever being laid, sentenced to serve a year in the Mercer Reformatory, one of the darkest dungeons in the history of corrections in this province. Her only crime was that as a white woman, she loved a Chinese man. For that, she was deemed "incorrigible" under the Female Refuges Act.

Sixty years later, still wrestling with those demons born in that five-foot-seven windowless cell, she has had the courage to come forward and seek acknowledgement of the injustice, to seek an apology, and to seek compensation for what was stolen from her.

You're blocking her action in the court by invoking sections 28 and 29 of the Proceedings Against the Crown Act. Why are you forcing her into the courts? Why won't you sit down with Velma Demerson and negotiate a settlement that includes an apology?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** The Minister of Citizenship is prepared to respond.

**Hon Carl DeFaria (Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors):** Certainly there are very difficult and very personal issues involved in this case. I understand the member bringing it forward. As an immigrant to this country, I consider these issues very seriously. My

colleague will understand that this matter is before the courts and therefore it's very difficult to comment on them because everyone should have their day in court.

What I want to talk about is how far we have come since those days. Our Ontario Human Rights Code plays a vital role in protecting the rights of all Ontarians. It prohibits discrimination against people because of their race, religion, place of origin and ethnic origin. In addition to enforcing the code, the Ontario Human Rights Commission does important work in all areas of anti-race—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** The minister's time is up. Supplementary.

**Mr Kormos:** Velma Demerson isn't alone. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of women, in state-sanctioned misogyny, and in her case racism as well, were thrust into jail cells—Velma had her child stolen from her when she gave birth to it in custody—and have suffered state-sanctioned abuse for which they seek and deserve acknowledgement, a formal apology and compensation to help them recover from the wounds that were suffered at the hands of their government.

Minister, please stand up and say that these people will receive what is due them in exchange for the injustice they suffered and the unspeakable things done to them while they were in custody. Tell them that this government will develop a process now for all of those victims of the women's Female Refugees Act, acknowledging the injustice imposed upon them, acknowledging their pain, apologizing and compensating them.

**Hon Mr DeFaria:** Again, I would like to point out that my friend knows very well it's inappropriate for a minister to comment on a case before the courts. This case comes from the late 1930s.

What I want to tell you is that our government recognizes that cultural diversity is one of the province's greatest strengths. Ontario has welcomed approximately 120,000 new immigrants each and every year for the past 10 years. Our government is committed to ensuring that newcomers are welcome in Ontario, that their rights are protected.

As I went across this province delivering the newcomer settlement program, I met with immigrant groups from all corners of this province. I can tell you that we have gone a long way. This province is a welcoming and diverse province. I'm so proud to be in this province today—

**The Speaker:** The minister's time is up.

#### FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** My question today is for the Minister of Public Safety and Security. First, I would like to acknowledge the fact that this is Fire Prevention Week and ask all members of the Legislature to keep in mind the commitment and dedication of all of our firefighters to keep our communities safe.

My question deals directly with the safety of the firefighters and the security of our communities. During the

inquest into a deadly fire in Sudbury last April, officials from the fire marshal's office made statements that inadequate fire services existed in 15—and some said 20—Ontario communities. Three people—two very young children and their great-grandmother—died in that fire where there was only one full-time firefighter.

After the inquest, and only after the press conference by the International Association of Fire Fighters last week pressuring the release of the names of those communities, did you comply. Keeping firefighters in any community in the dark about such basic fire services is unacceptable. Ontario communities that are lacking in fire protection and firefighters in those communities deserve the right to know. A statement that was made by Mr Wallace from your ministry said, "The goal is to have the best standards possible, but municipalities can't always afford all the things that they want." Minister, this is absolutely outrageous—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** The member's time is up.

1510

**Hon Robert W. Runciman (Minister of Public Safety and Security):** I do agree with the member that communities certainly have a right to know if there are any serious concerns related to fire safety in their communities. The indications given to me are that that indeed was the case with respect to this list.

It's a monitoring list of communities that may have a number of concerns identified perhaps by the fire adviser out of the fire marshal's office or, in some instances, by the communities themselves. In fact, in the city of Kingston, the fire chief asked for assistance, asked to be put on the monitoring list of the fire marshal's office because they've been going through amalgamation of fire services. He wanted that extra insight and advice in terms of insurance that they were proceeding in an appropriate way.

If at any point in time the fire marshal determines there is a serious safety risk to any community, he has the right and responsibility to intervene and ensure that changes take place.

**Mr Levac:** Then you must realize that the fire marshal has never done it. The fact we've got that many communities identified shows there needs to be more action. As a matter of fact, the NFPA, the National Fire Protection Association, is administering international standard 1710, which is being accepted from state to state and by provinces. I would like to know whether we are going to stick with the standards that we're going to make. And why would we not have supported my Bill 141, which would have made sure the fire marshal reviewed all the changes that were proposed by municipalities and got them approved?

What we need to do is make sure that people understand that 89% of Ontarians support the adoption of 1710, 85% of Ontarians believe the provincial government should provide some funding for those standards for municipalities to be maintained and 86% of Ontarians believe that specific standards are important regarding



response time and a number of personal requirements to respond to those.

Minister, would you make the commitment today that you will investigate 1710 and establish the money that's necessary for those communities to keep our people safe and secure and avoid another Sudbury?

**Hon Mr Runciman:** The provision of fire services is a municipal responsibility. The fire marshal's office has oversight and certainly has the ability, power and authority to intervene, as I indicated earlier, if there is a serious threat to public safety.

But for the member to suggest that things have not gone well in the past number of years—this government is the government that brought in the first changes to the fire act in 50 years. We have invested significant monies in upgrades to the fire college. We have put money into the training of CBRN teams, which is underway right now at the fire college. We are putting money into heavy urban search and rescue teams. If you take a look at the incidence of residential fires in this province, they've dropped dramatically over the life of this government. If you look at the number of fatalities arising from accidental fires, last year they were the lowest in the history of this province.

#### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr Rob Sampson (Mississauga Centre):** My question is to the Minister of Labour, and it concerns workplace safety. Many people have criticized various government stands on workplace safety, including, I believe, ours. Some critics have said that trying to target zero accidents in the workplace is totally unrealistic and is an unattainable goal. I believe you've said that achieving that number can only be done if there's a concerted effort to try to get there, if there's a concerted effort to actually try to make the workplace safe so there are no incidents in a particular workplace.

I'm just wondering whether you can comment on the achievability, if you will, of that target and enlighten us on whether anybody has actually been able to come somewhat close to, or perhaps even hit, that target.

**Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Labour):** I have stated many times that safe workplaces involve creating a culture of safety where workplace injuries are not acceptable. If we look back in the past with drinking and driving, we've actually changed the entire attitude in the general public regarding that. We consider it to be reprehensible and immoral. A change in attitude toward safety in the workplace will achieve the same goal.

This is a realistic goal for workplaces. In fact, on Friday I attended an event in Mississauga where Enersource Corp celebrated six years, or three million hours, of lost-time and injury-free work—a remarkable accomplishment. They've done it by implementing their safety philosophy within their own company, with their union, with the board of directors, right down to the newest employee just starting on the job. They have shown that

with commitment, dedication and discipline there need not be a single workplace injury.

**Mr Sampson:** Again, thank you, Minister. I know the mayor of Mississauga has never said this before, but clearly Mississauga is again leading the rest of the province in a lot of matters as they relate to the administration of this province. Three million hours is a tremendous achievement and I feel like knocking on wood because I know that many people are hoping they can continue that record on and on and on.

But clearly there is some management expertise and some understanding of how to achieve those records that are in the bowels of Enersource and their tremendous management. I'm wondering, Minister, whether you have plans on how you would hope to help that company and help you relate that message to other companies, small and large, across the province so they can be likewise challenged to try to meet or exceed that particular standard.

**Hon Mr Clark:** What we're going to be doing is setting up partnerships. That's what this is about. The president of Enersource, Gunars Ceksters, in getting their philosophy, their approach and their practices into other workplaces, has agreed to come forward and help us do just that: to work with our partners and spread the word across the province. As a matter of fact, Enersource has already been asked to manage health and safety in another Ontario community. So they're going to spread their good program to other areas across the province.

There are companies, organizations and individuals who do share the goal. We believe safety is the priority. It can be done. Enersource has proven it.

Let me leave members with Enersource's health and safety objective: "Safety must come first. There is never a task too urgent that it should allow personal safety to be overlooked." That is what drives Enersource; that's what we should all be driving for.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** My question is for the Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services. Minister, you will be aware that today parents representing the Peel Family Network held a press conference here at Queen's Park to draw attention to your government's, your Premier's and your dismal disregard for their plight.

These parents are in the gallery now. With them are their sons and daughters with developmental disabilities. For several years now they have been attempting to reach out to you and your government to listen to their grievances and concerns. These parents have been in a state of crisis. Why have you and your government repeatedly refused to listen to them? I ask, what are you going to do for these parents and their children?

**Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services):** I thank my colleague in the Liberal Party across the way for the question. This gives

me an opportunity to clarify our government's position on developmental services. Certainly, we feel it is very important to provide a wide variety of services that are essential for individuals with developmental disabilities. That's why we offer a variety of different kinds of programs: respite care, both in and out of home; individual and group living arrangements; community participation support; and specialized community supports as well.

We've made tremendous strides in offering many new services to individuals in Ontario. In our budget in May 2001 we announced multi-year funding, growing to an additional \$197 million a year by 2006-07. At the end of that, it would mean that over \$1 billion is being spent on developmental services in Ontario.

**Mr Sergio:** Minister, these families need your government's urgent help now. They need more than just words about services and support that might be provided to meet the individual needs of people with developmental disabilities.

These special people have special needs, with individual complaints. With this come changes, and responsible parents deserve options and choices. An integrated environment does not work in every case. The options program with this individualized support has proven successful in the city of Toronto, but because of your government's lack of funding and long waiting lists, it's inaccessible for these persons. Again, Minister, this program works. It allows families to integrate into their children's support and services; it is cost-effective; it provides a flexible approach; it allows for an environment where children and adults can move forward and improve the quality of their lives.

Minister, I ask you again, on behalf of these parents and their sons and daughters, will you commit to meet with them today and give them a promise that indeed you will come through with help?

**Hon Mrs Elliott:** I thank my colleague across the way for the question. I am aware of the concerns that have been raised by this particular organization. I will indicate that as the minister I am examining the issue of individualized funding and independent funding.

We try very hard in our ministry to be responsive to the families that we serve, and we make every effort to do so. I receive hundreds of invitations to meet, and try to be as responsive as possible to all of those.

Having that in mind, my colleague the Minister of Citizenship has twice met with this organization, but I would be most pleased and will make every effort to have a meeting with these particular individuals.

1520

#### RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** My question is for the Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing responsible for rural affairs. Minister, last summer you visited my riding of Perth-Middlesex as part of your tour of rural Ontario. During your visit you announced OSTAR funding for St Marys in my riding.

These funds will assist St Marys in the revitalization of its downtown. By the way, Mayor Jamie Hahn sends his regards and says to say hello.

I know this was just one of many reasons you were touring rural Ontario. Minister, I'm very interested in what you heard and what our government is doing to address barriers to economic growth and ensure our small towns and rural communities remain viable, healthy and vibrant places in which to work, live and invest. Can you give us an update?

**Hon Brian Coburn (Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** I want to thank the member from Perth-Middlesex for his question. I can tell you one thing that became very evident as I went through your community: that your residents have a great deal of respect for you and for the tireless efforts you've made on behalf of your residents. Certainly the member in one of his efforts was recognized here in 1998.

It's very appropriate that the question be asked today, when the minister introduced a private member's bill to recognize a week in the year to recognize the contribution the agricultural community provides to us, and that's Ontario Agriculture Week.

This is an opportunity seven days of the year during harvest time when we can acknowledge the contributions of our agricultural producers to our rural and small-town prosperity. As the minister responsible for rural affairs, over the last couple of months, July and August in particular, I had an opportunity to travel across the province, meeting with hard-working residents, municipal representatives and business leaders of our small and rural communities and hearing some of the big challenges they've faced, and we're addressing those in a number of different issues.

**Mr Johnson:** Minister, I know that rural Ontarians are delighted that you're working so hard on their behalf to develop and implement solutions that help create good jobs. Clearly, overcoming barriers to rural economic development is a key issue, but not the only one that's on the minds of our rural residents.

Minister, going back to your tour, can you expand on the highlights of your visits that would be of interest to both the members of this House and the good residents of my riding of Perth-Middlesex?

**Hon Mr Coburn:** All across rural Ontario we have some real jewels in our communities and small towns. In a recent visit to St Marys, I had the opportunity to visit the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame. For those members who haven't been there, I suggest that it would be a good place to drop in and find out what a contribution Ontarians have made to baseball. This is a wonderful museum that brings the history of the great game of baseball alive.

I visited Lambton county as well and toured the Petrolia town hall. That was reconstructed after the original building was destroyed by fire. It has been rebuilt under the leadership of the former mayor, our member Marcel Beaubien from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. It's a town hall by day and a lively and vibrant theatre at night. I was impressed by the planning and the fore-

thought of the members and leaders in that community to turn this into a multi-use facility.

There are many examples of that right across this province, and I just want to tell you that we have invested about \$27 million in 30 projects—

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** I'm afraid the member's time is up.

#### CHILD CARE CENTRE

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, your cuts to our public schools are shutting down a unique program that is so important for new Canadians and for our economic well-being. This Friday the child care centre at Shirley Street Public School in Toronto will close its doors for good. By the way, they only had three weeks' notice. This is the only child care centre for adult ESL learners in the entire Toronto board. I am asking you, Minister, will you personally get involved so that this child care centre does not shut down for good?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Deputy Premier, Minister of Education):** I think it is really important that we get the facts right. I understand that the facility that you're talking about was originally funded by a federal grant that the Liberals may have decided seven years ago to end. Since then it has been funded by the board, but the facility is not a child care. It is a child-minding service, and there are two other daycare facilities within two blocks of the Shirley Street school for parents who take the LINC program. So the children have the opportunity to be accommodated there. It is a child-minding service; it isn't a daycare.

**Mr Marchese:** The central coordinating principal of continuing education sent this letter three weeks ago saying, "We no longer have the money to be able to support this program." It is also true that New Democrats believe in levelling the playing field so that every family has a shot at a better life. That means helping parents learn English so they can work, of course, and participate in Ontario's future. It also means providing quality child care that prepares our youngest children for school and a good start in life. The Shirley Street child care centre does all of these things, but you are contributing, through this terrible funding model that you have, to shutting this care down.

All I am asking you today, Minister, is to reform your funding formula so as to allow the Toronto board to be able to keep this essential service. Can you do that? Will you do that?

**Hon Mrs Witmer:** Again, let's just cut through some of the ambiguity. The Toronto board offers adult ESL classes and there is child care provided, but let's get one thing straight: it's not funded by the board; it's funded by various community partners. This particular service that you're talking about is a child-minding service. There are two daycare facilities within two blocks for parents taking the LINC program. We also understand that the city of Toronto is currently in negotiations with both the

Learning Enrichment Foundation and the YMCA to open a real, full-service daycare. So certainly these children and parents are not going to lose a service. There are other provisions. Just as other parents that access these programs have an opportunity to access child care funded by community groups, these children and parents will have the same opportunity.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of the Environment, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot item 60 be waived. That's notice for Mr Sampson to have his ballot item debated this Thursday. I had agreement with your House leaders.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed. The government House leader?

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** No, I'm done.

**The Speaker:** Did you want to move the motion? You asked for unanimous consent; now you move it.

**Hon Mr Stockwell:** Sorry. I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot item 60 be waived.

**The Speaker:** All in favour? Carried.

1530

#### PETITIONS

##### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% over the last three years, \$3.02 per diem in the first year and \$2 in the second year, \$2 in the third year, effective September 1, 2002;

"Whereas this increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month after three years;

"Whereas this increase is above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario for 2002;

"Whereas, according to the government's own funded study, Ontario still will rank last among comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care;

"Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need;

"Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan back in 1999;

"Whereas this province has been built by seniors, who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in the comfort of this province;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We demand that Premier Eves reduce the 15% increase over three years in accommodation costs to no more than the cost-of-living increase annually and that the provincial government provide adequate funding for nursing and personal care to a level that is at least the average standard for nursing and personal care in those 10 jurisdictions included in the government’s own study.”

I affix my signature and am in complete agreement with the sentiments expressed in this petition.

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that was sent to me by the nursing staff at Thorntonview Nursing Home in Oshawa. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Conservative government increased fees paid by Ontario seniors and other vulnerable people living in long-term-care facilities by 15% ... instead of providing adequate government funding for long-term care; and

“Whereas the Conservative government has therefore shifted the cost of long-term care on to the backs of the frail elderly and their families;

“Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas in 1996 Ontario abandoned its minimum requirement of 2.25 hours of nursing care per nursing home resident;

“Whereas the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas, according to the government’s own study, government cutbacks have resulted in Ontario seniors receiving just 14 minutes a day of care from a registered nurse...; and

“Whereas the study also found that Ontario residents receive the least nursing, bathing and general care of nine other comparable locations;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

We demand “the Conservative government eliminate the 15% fee increase for residents of long-term-care facilities, increase the number of nursing care hours for each resident to a minimum of 3.5 hours per day, and provide stable, increased funding to ensure quality care is there for Ontario residents of long-term-care facilities.”

I agree with the petitioners and I’ve affixed my signature to it.

#### SERVICES DE SANTÉ POUR ENFANTS

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** J’ai une pétition qui provient des communautés d’Alfred, Plantagenet et Hawkesbury.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Attendu que le gouvernement de l’Ontario est en train de fermer le service de chirurgie cardiaque à l’inten-

tion des enfants fonctionnant actuellement à l’Hôpital pour enfants de l’est de l’Ontario;

« Attendu que la fermeture de ce programme restreindrait l’accès des enfants de l’est de l’Ontario à cette chirurgie, qui sauve des vies;

« Attendu que l’HEEO traite chaque année 140 enfants gravement malades à proximité de leur foyer;

« Attendu que la centralisation des services de chirurgie cardiaque pour les enfants à Toronto obligerait les patients et leurs parents à s’éloigner de 400 kilomètres à 600 kilomètres de leur foyer à un moment difficile;

« Attendu qu’il y a une liste d’attente pour la chirurgie cardiaque à Toronto mais pas à l’HEEO;

« Attendu qu’une partie du personnel de ce programme de l’HEEO parle français et que, de ce fait, la population francophone a accès à des conseils médicaux de qualité supérieure en français;

« Attendu que la population de l’est de l’Ontario exige des soins de santé de qualité et accessibles pour ses enfants,

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario d’annuler immédiatement la décision du gouvernement d’abolir ce programme, qui sauve des vies, et de veiller à ce que chaque enfant de l’est de l’Ontario continue d’avoir pleinement accès à des soins de santé de qualité supérieure. »

J’y ajoute ma signature avec fierté.

#### CHILD CARE

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have two petitions that were sent to me by la Garderie Petit Trésor in Elliot Lake and Andrew Fleck Child Care Services in Ottawa. It reads as follows:

“Whereas 70% of Ontario women with children under age 12 are in the paid workforce;

“Whereas high-quality, safe, affordable child care is critical to them and their families;

“Whereas the Early Years Study done for the Conservative government by Dr Fraser Mustard and the Honourable Margaret McCain concluded quality child care enhances early childhood development;

“Whereas this government has cut funding for regulated child care instead of supporting Ontario families by investing in early learning and care;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario government adopt the NDP’s \$10-a-day child care plan and begin implementation by reducing full child care fees to \$10 a day for children aged two to five currently enrolled in regulated child care, by providing capital funds to expand existing child care centres and build new ones, by funding pay equity for staff and by creating new \$10-a-day child care spaces in the province.”

I agree with the petitioners and have affixed my signature to this.

#### NATURAL GAS RATES

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases.”

It's signed by a number of petitioners from Paincourt, Charing Cross, Thamesville and Chatham.

#### HEALTH CARE SERVICES

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ernie Eves government is putting in place a system where the wealthy will be allowed to bypass waiting lists by paying out of their pockets for MRI and CT scans;

“Whereas existing public MRI and CT machines are not currently being used to their full capacity;

“Whereas the decision to open private clinics was the result of a private sector health care bias and not evidence proving that these private clinics would be faster, safer or cheaper than public clinics;

“Whereas a centrally managed waiting list process is needed and has not been put into place to prevent queue jumping simply by visiting private clinics;

“Whereas Ontario is short 150 radiologists and new private clinics would only siphon off those already working in public clinics;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to tell Ernie Eves that he must stop this plan to allow the wealthy to jump to the head of the line and to put Ontario families first by protecting our universally accessible health care system.”

This is signed by a large number of my constituents who share this concern, and I affix my signature in full agreement with them.

#### NATURAL GAS RATES

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Union Gas/Duke Energy has had a retroactive increase in natural gas prices approved with interest by the Ontario Energy Board; and

“Whereas all the appointees have been appointed by the provincial Conservative government; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Energy gave itself the authority in 1998 to review the decisions of the board if they are not in the public interest; and

“Whereas the company applying for these increases is already very profitable and is making more money than ever before; and

“Whereas this retroactive increase is unfair, un-businesslike and holds consumers hostage;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Minister of Energy intervene to overturn this decision and protect the public interest and the consumers of natural gas.”

I affix my signature to this petition.

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board has consented to allow Union Gas to retroactively charge \$40 per month for a three-month period to recover additional system operation costs that occurred during the winter of 2000-01 totalling approximately \$150 million; and

“Whereas Union Gas will recover accrued costs over the peak heating season, causing undue hardship; and

“Whereas this retroactive charge will affect all customers who receive Union Gas, including new homeowners and new customers to Union Gas;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Ernie Eves government issue a policy directive under section 27.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act disallowing the retroactive rate hike granted to Union Gas, and we further demand that the Legislature examine the Ontario Energy Board, its processes and its resources, and make changes that will protect consumers from further retroactive rate increases.”

This petition is signed by a number of residents from Blenheim, Chatham and Dresden.

1540

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities, by 15% over three years, or \$3.02 per diem in the first year, \$2 in the second year and \$2 a day in the third year, effective September 1, 2002;

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month after three years; and

“Whereas this increase is above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario for 2002; and

“Whereas, according to the government's own funded study, Ontario will still rank last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funds by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Demand that Premier Eves reduce the 15% increase over three years in accommodation costs to no more than the cost-of-living increase annually and that the provincial government provide adequate funding for nursing and personal care to a level that is at least at the average standard for nursing and personal care in those 10 jurisdictions included in the government’s own study.”

This has been signed by thousands of residents in my area of Sarnia-Lambton and I affix my signature to this petition.

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** I have, it looks like, a couple of hundred more names on a petition which reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Eves government has increased the fees paid for by seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities by 15% or \$7.02 per diem effective August 1, 2002; and

“Whereas this fee increase will cost seniors and our most vulnerable more than \$200 a month; and

“Whereas this increase is 11.1% above the rent increase guidelines for tenants in the province of Ontario; and

“Whereas the increase in the government’s own contribution to raise the level of long-term-care services this year is less than \$2 per resident per day; and

“Whereas according to the government’s own funded study, Ontario ranks last amongst comparable jurisdictions in the amount of time provided to a resident for nursing and personal care; and

“Whereas the long-term-care funding partnership has been based on government accepting the responsibility to fund the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas government needs to increase long-term-care operating funding by \$750 million over the next three years to raise the level of service for Ontario’s long-term-care residents to those in Saskatchewan back in 1999; and

“Whereas this province has been built by seniors who should be able to live out their lives with dignity, respect and in comfort in this province;

“We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:”

We demand “that Premier Eves reduce his 15% fee increase on seniors and the most vulnerable living in long-term-care facilities and increase provincial government support for nursing and personal care to adequate levels.”

I affix my signature. I am in agreement with this petition.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson):** The time for petitions has expired.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SUSTAINABLE WATER AND SEWAGE SYSTEMS ACT, 2002

#### LOI DE 2002 SUR LA DURABILITÉ DES RÉSEAUX D’EAU ET D’ÉGOUTS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 3, 2002, on the motion for second reading of Bill 175, An Act respecting the cost of water and waste water services / Projet de loi 175, Loi concernant le coût des services d’approvisionnement en eau et des services relatifs aux eaux usées.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson):** The floor is now open for debate.

**Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East):** On behalf of the people of Don Valley East, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about Bill 175. Bill 175 is the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act. It is perhaps one of the most crucial acts that this House is going to deal with in the five years I’ve been a member here. It is important that we attend to it. Of course we saw this bill originally introduced about nine months ago as Bill 155, then under the carriage of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I’m going to be talking about a few things in the short time I have allotted to me here today.

I have concerns that this bill is just another in a series of “trust me” bills. “Trust me,” says the Eves-Harris government, “when it comes to protecting the drinking water of Ontario residents.” I have concerns that in fact Bill 175 is not consistent with Justice O’Connor’s report into the events in Walkerton, Ontario, and his recommendations how to ensure that we have sustainable, safe, clean drinking water. I have concerns about the maintenance of the ownership of water in public hands.

Let me begin by placing my comments here today in context. I want to read to you from an editorial in the *Hamilton Spectator*, Monday, September 30:

“If the Ernie Eves government expects people to believe that safe drinking water is among its top priorities, it had better start to provide the evidence. More than two years after the Walkerton tragedy, the Conservatives don’t appear close to implementing the safeguards they have promised.”

Further, from the *St Catharines Standard*: “Now that Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller has issued his annual report, the damning evidence indicates there is no reason to hope the Ontario Tories are doing anything to make our drinking water safe. Indeed, in Miller’s words, ‘I suspect the problem may be worse than ever.’”

Finally, from the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*: “If you think the Ontario government learned the bitter lessons of

Walkerton, where seven lives were lost due to contaminated water, think again. If you believe the Conservatives are now doing everything possible to guard the public by making the province's water supply safe, get the report just released by the province's Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller. Then get mad."

These three editorials say it very well. The Harris-Eves government says, "Trust me." All of the evidence says contrary.

As I mentioned, this is a so-called "trust me" bill from the Harris-Eves government. They want us to trust them on several issues, and I'm going to outline those here and now.

The definition of "water services provider": there are thousands of small-scale water providers—trailer camps, summer resorts, communal water systems. Which of these entities will be exempt from the act? Why couldn't this be spelled out in Bill 175? Will there be real protection of our water systems if too many people are made exempt? All fair and legitimate questions.

Bill 175 does not explicitly deal with the issue of the privatization of municipal water and sewer infrastructure. But the bill does not refer to municipalities; it only refers to what they call "regulated entities." The definition of a regulated entity will be determined by regulation. Regulation, as opposed to the bill, which is legislation, is to be determined later under the cover of darkness with no public oversight—another one of these "trust me" provisions. I can tell all members of this House, but especially the members of the public, that Ontario Liberals believe that the definition of "regulated entities" should only be municipalities.

The Harris-Eves government wants us to trust them as they define "full costs," as in full cost accounting and full cost recovery, in regulation. "Full costs" could mean several things. Does it mean we include total cash expenditures, adding together all direct overhead costs and operating costs of the water and sewer systems? Does it mean that we include the total debt repayment costs reasonably attributed to the works? Does it mean that this includes a total sustainability allowance that includes allowances for renewal, replacement and improvements? Again, it is completely undefined.

"Trust me," say Ernie Eves and Mike Harris in their legacy. We know not to trust them. They want us to trust them to set the deadlines and time frames for compliance. This has been a concern of folks like the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association. It doesn't give municipalities very much to go on. There's no commitment at all in the bill to a phase-in.

#### 1550

Like Justice O'Connor, Ontario Liberals support the principle of full-cost accounting for our water and sewers. We also believe that after the tragedy in Walkerton, Ontario, water users are willing to pay their fair share to ensure that drinking water is safe. But it would be helpful for municipalities, particularly smaller municipalities, to know how much they're going to have

to pay to implement these plans. The costs may not be so small in scope.

Let me echo some of the concerns from a recent editorial in the Sault Ste Marie Star:

"Communities the size of Sault Ste Marie and larger can generally look after themselves, because the large population base yields economies of scale. The Public Utilities Commission can spread the cost of upgrades among its 25,000 customers.

"However, smaller municipalities, including several in Algoma, are hard-pressed to fund upgrades with their limited tax base. Bruce Mines is looking at a possible \$3.5 million filtration project to provide safe water for its 500 residents. Thessalon faces spending \$5 million for 1,300 people.

"If the 600 households in Thessalon had to foot the whole bill, that would mean a charge of more than \$8,000" per household "for the capital project alone." Add on top of that the operation and ongoing maintenance.

There are also some questions about what exactly is user pay. Will municipalities be allowed to cover the costs from the municipal tax revenues? Will users—households and businesses—be the ones to cover the usage directly? What incentives will there be for municipalities to move to metered water systems? If these incentives and payment procedures are not defined in the legislation, as they are not, how can municipalities plan for the future? All legitimate questions; no answers at all from the government except, "Trust me. Trust us." As we've learned to our sorrow and shame and embarrassment, and our tragic deaths, we can't.

The government wants us to believe that the new water rates won't become prohibitive for low-income families and seniors. Maybe this bill needs real protections that would ensure that municipalities cannot cut off users from their water supply. In fact, many municipalities have emergency service bylaws. I hope the government would take this issue seriously and entrench it in legislation to ensure that no resident of Ontario can be denied access to water. Presently they could.

Justice O'Connor takes this very seriously. He said in very explicit terms that higher water rates may "constitute a significant burden for low-income families and individuals.... Suffice it to say that, since water is an essential need, it would be unacceptable for those who are unable to pay for safe water to go without. The provincial and municipal governments should ensure that this does not occur by whatever means they consider appropriate." You'll find that reference on page 313 of the second volume of his report.

Finally, let's remind the House exactly what Justice O'Connor said in the Walkerton report when he was referring to Bill 155, which is exactly the same as Bill 175, save and except for the change from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to the Ministry of the Environment: "In my opinion, if passed into law, the act," the old Bill 155, "will address many of the important issues concerning the financing of water systems that

I discuss in this section. The requirements for a full cost report and cost-recovery plan, as generally expressed in the proposed act, are ... appropriate.”

So Justice O'Connor says these are reasonable measures but there are a lot of unanswered questions. You see, Justice O'Connor is concerned, as are Ontario Liberals, and as government backbench members should be, that the most important elements of the bill are going to be laid out later by regulation and that they're not contained within the bill itself. The regulations, he says on page 299, will be critical. O'Connor says the “trust me” provisions in Bill 155, now found in Bill 175, are critical. Then why wouldn't the government take heed of Justice O'Connor's wise counsel and put certainty and surety in the legislation itself? I'll be very interested to see in committee and in second and third reading if the minister will provide those assurances to the House that those crucial elements will in fact be embedded in the legislation. Justice O'Connor believes that we should have concern about the items that will be laid out in regulation at some later time, without any legislative oversight. Quite frankly, Ontario Liberals agree.

As I said earlier, Ontario Liberals will be opposing this bill because we do not believe it is consistent with the recommendations of Justice O'Connor in the Walkerton report and in fact fails to address some of its major concerns. While Bill 175 addresses some of the concerns, it does not address all of them. I see it as conceivable that if this bill were to be amended in such a way, it could have the support of all members of this House, and I hope the government would be willing to work with the official opposition to ensure that this bill complies with the wise counsel of Justice O'Connor.

I want to give you some examples of how O'Connor said Bill 175—or Bill 155 at the time—could be strengthened, could be acceptable to his vision for water quality and safety. As I said, I will not be supporting this bill unless the government includes an amendment that reflects a key point—in fact, there are several key points raised by Justice O'Connor.

Number one, specifically prohibiting municipalities from selling off water and sewer systems to the private sector. Let me repeat that: there is no provision in this bill that specifically prohibits a municipality from selling off its water systems, contrary to what Justice O'Connor had to say on page 332 of his report. Ontario Liberals believe that the private sector has a role to play in the construction and perhaps in the operation and management of water systems, but ownership of the system must remain in public hands.

Justice O'Connor supports this position explicitly. He says, “In not recommending the sale of municipal water systems to the private sector, my conclusion is based on several considerations: the essentially local character of water services; the natural monopoly characteristics of the water industry; the importance of maintaining accountability to local residents; and the historical role of municipalities in this field,”—part two, page 332, of Justice O'Connor's report. I agree. In fact, dare I say it's a common-sense notion?

I want to put the government on notice and I want to put the minister on notice that the official opposition will be introducing a specific amendment. We'll be introducing several amendments, but we will be introducing a specific amendment that will prohibit private ownership of municipal water systems.

I know we had a lot of bandied-about comments about a clean drinking water act. In fact, when our colleague from the third party, Marilyn Churley, introduced her Safe Drinking Water Act, there was no prohibition on the sale of water systems to the private sector. So Ontario Liberals will be the only ones standing up in this Legislature to place an emphasis on this key and critical question about ownership, about a natural monopoly. Speaker, you can rest assured that we will be holding the government's feet to the fire. If they accept that amendment, it would go a long way to helping us support the bill.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** Maybe yes, maybe no.

**Mr Caplan:** I hear the member from Durham saying, “Maybe yes, maybe no.” Aren't you committed to Justice O'Connor's report? I remember I heard Premier Eves say to this House—

**Mr O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would like to make sure that the member opposite is not impugning my particular motives. We support all the 121 recommendations of the Justice O'Connor report.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Take your seat, please. You may resume.

1600

**Mr Caplan:** It's not a point of order, in fact, Speaker.

I've heard this line from the Premier and from the Minister of the Environment on several occasions, but if that were the case, why is the prohibition of the sale of Ontario's water systems to the private sector not contained in Bill 175, as was recommended in O'Connor's report? A good question. So we're going to put the member's and the Premier's words to that very test. We shall see if the government does not only accept the spirit but the letter of O'Connor's very wise counsel. As I said, I hope the government will support it. The Ontario Liberals will support Justice O'Connor, will in fact support the amendment, which I know my colleague the outstanding member from St Catharines will be bringing when this bill comes to committee.

There's a second measure of this bill that falls quite far short of O'Connor's report. The bill offers no guarantees that there will be any form of financial support for water and sewer infrastructure for smaller communities. I come from the city of Toronto. We have an enormous base of people, an enormous base of commercial and industrial activity. We can spread our costs for water and all of the other infrastructure in a municipality across millions of people. But there are many communities no less deserving of safe, clean drinking water that don't have that ability. That's the role for the provincial government to step forward.

As O'Connor clearly showed, this government was warned—actually, they were warned by their own



officials, they were warned by the medical officer of health, they were warned by the previous Environmental Commissioner that their reckless cuts to the environment would put the protection of our public health at risk. They were warned repeatedly. As Dr Richard Schabas said, Premier Harris and Premier Eves turned their back on public health.

Even two and a half years after the tragedy of Walkerton, the provincial government is still sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars in desperately needed water and sewer infrastructure funding. The funding was promised in August 2000, yet it looks like they're going to wait for an election to be called until the funds start flowing. How utterly cynical.

The Ontario Jobs and Investment Board calculated that a minimum of \$9 billion is required for the rehabilitation of Ontario's municipal water and sewer systems. Nine and a half million Ontarians rely on municipal drinking water plants for their drinking water. With the province now only offering one-time-only financial support, many municipalities will not be able to finance the expansion, the repair, the retrofit of water and sewer systems.

A February 2000 Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs report said, "Water and waste water systems are at capacity in many rural communities. Due to their limited tax base, these municipalities are having difficulty financing any expansion of their system." Those were the government's own advisors. That was two years ago. Where is this so-called commitment to providing safe, clean drinking water? Two years ago.

Traditionally, the Ontario government provided municipalities with \$100 million to \$150 million per year in grants. Most of the funds went to smaller communities with populations below 15,000, perhaps rightly so. However, Premier Harris and his Treasurer, Ernie Eves, eliminated all provincial financial support as part of their so-called Who Does What municipal downloading exercise. Reacting to negative media at the time, the Tories brought in a one-time \$200-million water fund that was quickly allocated. Following the Walkerton tragedy, the government brought in another one-time \$240-million: OSTAR, the Ontario small towns and rural initiative program. The program was announced in August 2000 and little more than \$40 million has been allocated. The government has been sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars.

Finally, I want to quote Justice O'Connor to end my time. He made specific reference to municipal government downloading: "The financing of water systems does not occur in isolation of other pressures on municipal budgets. In light of recent restructuring in the municipal sector, especially the transfer of additional open-ended social service costs ... to municipalities in 1998, there is currently some uncertainty about the ability of municipalities to finance all the programs they are responsible for."

**The Deputy Speaker:** The floor is now open for questions and comments. Members have up to two minutes.

**Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I listened with some interest, and I think the member from Don Valley East spoke very wisely and very well. He touched on many of the concerns that my caucus has with this bill. Quite frankly, I think a couple of points he made need to be highlighted and reinforced: first of all, the difficulty that many small municipalities in this province are going to have to finance the water infrastructure in their respective municipalities. This is a very difficult and costly proposition, particularly where the water systems are old. I'm speaking here about some of the smaller, rural and more northern communities that have built the water infrastructure over many years and are starting to see them deteriorate. This will be extremely difficult for those municipalities to finance.

We're also seeing boil-water orders in many parts of rural and northern Ontario. We're seeing little towns where people are forced to boil each and every drop that they pour from the tap. It is not safe for them to drink it. Much as I feel very safe lifting up this glass to my lips, knowing that it came from the city of Toronto, knowing it is one of the purest waters in the world, knowing that it's even purer, in terms of what's in it, than Perrier water that people spend \$2 on for a little bottle—for \$2 you can buy hundreds of gallons of the water that comes from here. I'll prove that I like it. That's not true in tiny little municipalities.

Last but not least, he talked about the municipal downloading that's going to happen. It's happening not only in places like Toronto, Hamilton or Ottawa; it's happening in every little town, and if it's not the water system, it's other costs. The municipalities are going to need a lot of help from this province if in fact they're going to be able to accomplish what this bill sets out.

**Mr O'Toole:** I listened this afternoon with a great deal of interest on the Act respecting the cost of water and waste water services. Just recently the minister, heaven forbid—the member from Don Valley East made some reference to their party's support for the Safe Drinking Water Act and Bill 175. In his comments, making some reference to Justice O'Connor, he implied that somehow the government—and I just want to put it on the record: what did Justice O'Connor say about Bill 175? Let's put it on the table right now.

He has been supportive and suggested that the act would address many of the important issues concerning the financing of water systems that he discussed in his report, such as recommendations 47 and 48. Recommendation 48 says that municipalities should have a plan to raise adequate resources for their water systems from local sources of revenue.

O'Connor also recognized that if the system is still too expensive after all options have been explored, then the province should make assistance available to lower the cost per household to a predetermined level. Since the government has started its commitment to implement all—I might stress that—all I believe 121 recommendations, what are the plans to address this one?

The province is working closely with the municipalities to ensure the infrastructure needed, to identify and

develop strategies to meet these needs. If I looked at the Walkerton issue and even before—it came to my attention in the period when the Liberals were in government. Mr Bradley would know this. In 1986, I believe, the first tests revealed a problem with well number 6 in Walkerton. No government, not the Liberal government, not the NDP government, responded to any of those reports that well number 6 had problems.

So I think there's more work to be done. We're the government to do it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for St Catharines.  
1610

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** The member is referring, of course, to the period of time when the Ministry of the Environment had a huge number of very talented, highly skilled and scientific staff, when it had the clout to do its job properly and when it had the financial resources.

The member for Don Valley East will recall that this government, when it came to office, virtually dismantled the Ministry of the Environment, firstly, by cutting the staff by some 33%, fired out the door, many of them in the water division of the ministry; second, by cutting the operating budget by over 50%; and, if I could put a third in, by removing any clout from the Ministry of the Environment by telling its employees that, first and foremost, they should be business-friendly. They would know how to interpret that as being easy on businesses who are going to perhaps be close to breaking the law in the province, if not breaking the law. That's most unfortunate because that's precisely what we tried to change in the Ministry of the Environment and were having some success doing.

What I'm concerned about, and the member alluded to this, is the cost to consumers. I think the principle of the bill is reasonable and I think the bill can be rescued with amendments that we can put forward. But with people getting huge hydro bills right now—if you want to listen to your constituency office, those calls are coming in about the outrageous increases in the price of hydro-electric power in this province. Second, there are huge increases in insurance. Third, natural gas is going way up. Fourth, gasoline at the pipe is going up. There are new municipal user fees because of provincial downloading. There are new provincial user fees, such as the huge increase for birth certificates and so on. All of this means that we're going to have to assist some municipalities in meeting the considerable costs that will flow from the provisions of this bill.

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** I enjoyed the comments by the member. I know he didn't have enough time to comment on a few aspects of the bill. One is how we ended up in this mess in the first place. I was astounded by listening to the member from the government side say that they were the government to deal with this problem. They forget that they're the government that created the crisis that we're in now. It was this government that slashed by over 50% the Ministry of the Environment budget, slashed by 50% the number of staff,

privatized the labs, did a litany of things that led to the drinking water in Walkerton and other communities, quite frankly, being unsafe.

This government was forced, by the opposition parties, to appoint Justice O'Connor to go out and do the inquiry that he did. He's now come back with his recommendations, and now this government is trying to somehow take credit as having done something good. If you've done anything good, it's to try and fix up the mess you created in the first place. Don't come in this House and tell us that drinking water has been made better by the actions of this government—quite frankly, it's quite the opposite.

The other thing is that the members talked about what this means to small communities, rural and northern communities. It's perfectly right. In communities across my riding, as it would be for Nickel Belt, Timiskaming, Kenora, all across the north, and I'm sure the same is true for other parts of the province, municipalities now are having a hard time trying to fund municipal infrastructures, trying to comply with the regulations the government has already put forward. A number of communities are not able to comply. The government's response has been, to date, "If you can't comply with existing regulations that the Tory government has put in place, not a problem; let's put off the implementation date from January 1, 2003, and push them off until after the next provincial election in July 2003." That's so far been the response of the government.

I say, if they're having a hard time trying to meet what you've already put on the table when it comes to being able to meet the fiscal challenge, how are they going to be able to deal with this? This bill, in the end, doesn't deal with that. What it's about is more user fees for consumers, and I don't think that's a good thing.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Don Valley East now has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr Caplan:** I want to thank the members from Beaches-East York, Durham, St Catharines and Timmins-James Bay for their comments.

They echo, perhaps except for the member from Durham, Justice O'Connor when he says on page 313 of his report, "I encourage the province to publicly review the program responsibilities and fiscal capability of municipalities in light of recent restructuring to ensure that the financial pressures on municipalities do not crowd out the adequate financing of water systems." What does that mean? It means that the Harris-Eves government has downloaded costs on to municipalities that are crowding out the ability to finance critical areas like providing safe, clean drinking water.

I would only say to the member from Durham, who spoke in terms of the government accepting all of the recommendations of Justice O'Connor's report, that if that were true, then I trust the government will be accepting the amendments that the official opposition is going to bring to ensure full compliance with O'Connor's report. It will be interesting to see whether the test of their commitment is true or not.

I am a little bit cynical, I must admit, having seen this government break its promise to the people of Ontario on so many occasions and recklessly put the people of Ontario in danger by their reckless cuts to the environment, by the gutting of the Ministry of the Environment staff, well laid out by the member for St Catharines, the member for Beaches-East York and the member for Timmins-James Bay. I am in agreement with them as to the wanton disregard that the Harris-Eves government had in relation to people's health and safety. We have paid the price. Seven people lost their lives. It was tragic. We want to make sure that never happens again. So I hope to one day support Bill 175.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The floor is now open for further debate.

**Mr Prue:** It is indeed my privilege to stand here today and talk about Bill 175. I've been here in the Legislature now for 53 weeks; this is my 53rd week. Throughout much of that time we have been talking about privatization, primarily about hydro, primarily about what is happening with the costs of hydro as it is deregulated and being sold off piece by piece to the highest bidder. People across this entire province are starting to get those hydro bills, and the phone calls coming into my constituency office seem to increase each and every week with people disgruntled about what those bills say, how much they cost, all the extra, added little charges that come to bear.

Today I got a letter from a person from rural Ontario who uses very little electricity, and he is most disgruntled. He is disgruntled because although he uses just modest amounts of electricity, he has to pay a minimum fee every three months. That minimum fee used to be \$20 for his electricity. He seldom would use that much electricity to actually incur that cost, but he did need the electricity for lights and some other things in his house. He heats with a wood stove and he tries to conserve wherever he can. That new minimum cost is now \$65, so his electricity bill has gone up three times as a result of privatization.

We have here, I think, another bill that is leading in exactly that same direction. It causes me no comfort, no comfort at all, that with the privatization of water the consumers in this province will be in any way better protected than they have been around this entire electricity privatization fiasco.

There are many things wrong with this bill, and I'm hoping it does go to committee. I'm hoping that some of the problems can be ironed out. I'm hoping that some of the fears that I and others express across this province can be assuaged.

There are three problems that we see.

Number one is that there is talk about full cost recovery, but nowhere in that full cost recovery, which may be a good idea, is there any talk whatsoever about source protection. Justice O'Connor talked about source protection as our first responsibility, and that is not included in this bill.

The second problem with this bill potentially is that the ministerial discretion is too broad. It allows the

minister to make regulations and to enforce his or her will upon the municipalities. We have all seen the problem this has caused in downloading to all of Ontario's 480 municipalities, and the fact that these very same municipalities are struggling each and every year to meet the tax requirements with the new responsibilities that have been given to them, responsibilities that are not of their own making but have been downloaded from Queen's Park.

Last but not least, we see that the delegation of powers that the minister exercises is far too broad, and his authority to redelegate that to third parties, including private companies, is far too broad and in the end may not protect the interests of consumers or the public in general.

**1620**

The first problem, in trying to get to some of the minutiae here, is that the municipal finance systems are delicate in this province. The money is raised largely by the tax rate on properties; that is, homeowners, condominium owners, business owners, factory owners and the owners of multi-residential units all pay taxes on the value of those properties. It makes up some 60%, sometimes 70%, of the tax rates of the municipalities. These are very delicate, and I would tell you that the tax systems were designed in such a way that they can look after truly local decision-making.

When the province downloads or imposes rules and regulations or systems upon these municipalities, it may make it increasingly difficult for the infrastructure to be maintained vis-à-vis the amount of assessment that is available in those municipalities. One has to be very careful in making regulation, and we do not see anywhere in this particular legislation where that has been taken into account sufficiently to make sure all of the 480 municipalities in this province are able to take on the enormous task which may befall them.

The second problem we see is that the legislation allows for water export to other jurisdictions. In fact, it even encourages it. What we have now is what many Canadians are starting to be fearful of: we are starting to be fearful that our water will be exported primarily to the United States—but if Newfoundland, I guess, has its way, in huge tankers to anywhere in the world that wants to buy it—draining lakes, much as the lake was drained just outside of Wawa to produce electricity. We may see in fact that lakes are drained for their water so that that water can be exported to places around the world. This causes, and should cause, a great deal of difficulty to all Canadians, to all Ontarians. Our water should not be for sale. It is a resource to this province. It is a resource that we covet. It is a resource that we try to protect for ourselves and for future generations. It is a resource that sustains life. It is a resource on which much of our recreation in this province depends: people who like to go boating or fishing; people who rely on the water for agriculture; people who rely on the water for 1,000 different reasons—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Sorry to interrupt. Please take your seat for just a moment. There are five other con-

versations going on and it's just starting to get a little bit louder. If you'd please take those conversations outside or, at the very least, keep your voices very low, I would be most appreciative.

Sorry for the interruption, Member. Please continue.

**Mr Prue:** I don't know whether I was speaking to the members opposite or on this side anyway. I was speaking to the television camera, as I am wont to do.

The reality here is that this will allow—I'm going to get into the privatization argument toward the end—foreign corporations to export our water. Once they have come in and taken control of municipal waterways—our springs, our lakes and our rivers—then it will become increasingly possible that foreign corporations will control our water, our waste water, and then in turn will be able to market it, send it and sell it to other bodies, to other jurisdictions, to other governments, to other countries.

With the greatest of respect, this bill does not deal with this and needs to deal with water exports. Clearly the federal government has made a commitment, at least for the near future, that there will be no exports of Canadian water, but this seems to be some way of allowing private corporations to sell the very water that we need to sustain our communities and the life in this province.

Thirdly, Mr Justice O'Connor has stated throughout his report that it is important that we develop a system from source to tap. The problem here is that although there is a system designed for the tap, there is nothing here for the source. There is nothing here that would allow for adequate financing to protect the source of our water supplies, whether they be in reservoirs or lakes or rivers or, in the case of Toronto or Hamilton, Lake Ontario. There is nothing here that would allow for the renewal and replacement of old and decrepit pipes, nor is there anything here that would allow for improvement costs to get water systems up to a standard we can afford and that every community should and must have. What happened in Walkerton was a crime to that community, and it should not be allowed to befall any other community that has an antiquated water system or a civil service that is incapable of doing the job, or inadequate money for chlorine and supplies. Therefore I think Mr Justice O'Connor is absolutely right that the source must be protected and must be foremost in our minds.

Mr Justice O'Connor went on to talk at great length about watershed planning, and he was committed to that idea. Will this watershed planning happen? If there is a download to municipalities, that cannot happen. It is, I would suggest, highly unlikely that this will be the case should this bill be adopted in its present form.

The fourth problem here is that water quality monitoring stations are quite abysmal. I read here from the annual report of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, because he has said it far better than I ever could. I'd just like to read this for the record, for those who are watching on television and for the odd one who may be listening. I quote here from page 47:

"From the above list, there would appear to be a comprehensive list of monitoring activities underway that could address the status of a broad range of ecosystem components. The provincial water quality monitoring network, however, has provided the main overview on water quality data for rivers and streams. Unfortunately, MOEE severely cut back on its monitoring network, from 730 stations in 1995 to 240 by 2000. Only six of these stations are located across the vast expanse of northern Ontario. The remainder represent less than six stations per major watershed in southern Ontario. The dismantling of the network seems clearly inconsistent with MOEE's 2001-2002 business plan. The water bodies at the stations are sampled between two and 12 times per year for up to 39 parameters, mostly metals, nutrients and ions. No consolidation or interpretive reports are produced from the acquired data, and this severely limits the usefulness of the data to environmental decision-making and to the public."

Clearly, the water quality monitoring stations are instrumental and key to any province-wide decision on safe water. Without them, this bill is weak. I would hope, if this goes to committee, that this can be added to the legislation as well.

We have the problem of local decision-making. The minister will define the sources of revenue that each of the municipalities or each of the water boards may access. He or she defines the sources of revenue. At the same time, the minister will set the maximum amount a municipality or entity may raise the rates; that is, if a municipality decides it must double the rates for water in order to improve the infrastructure, and even should the citizens of that municipality agree this is a good thing rather than have inferior or harmful water, it will still be up to the minister to say, "No, you cannot do that," and the minister could say, "No, you cannot do that," which would take away local decision-making from a community that knows what they want and knows what they need to make the best decision. This does not seem to be a correct provision of the bill.

Surely a municipality, no matter how large or how small, that wants to protect its citizens and spend more than the maximum amount set out by ministerial guideline should have the right to do so. Allowing the minister to set the maximum amount and determine and define the sources of revenue for the municipality is a backward step when we in this province are trying to make municipalities and municipal politicians, who are elected locally and are there to serve local interests, accountable to the people they serve.

**1630**

This brings us down to the delegation of powers. There is also a problem in this legislation where the minister may delegate any of his or her powers to any third person, whether that person is a member of the bureaucracy of this province or is employed by this province. I would even put out the scenario that the delegation may be sent down to a private corporation that is managing the water on behalf of a municipality. We

would see the I think terrible circumstance where the minister would delegate responsibility to a foreign company which, in turn, quite literally would not do what was in the best interests of the municipality they were serving, especially if they had a long-term contract and especially if what they were required to do was expensive.

It is often said on the other side of the House that privatization is a good thing. I would beg to differ. My own experience in municipal politics showed that privatized services most often, if not always, were inferior to public ones. First of all, the people do not have the pride of ownership. Second, there must be a profit made, because why would anyone be in a private business if not to make a profit? Therefore, oftentimes many services, many safeguards are skipped in order to make sure that money is made.

Just a few examples of what is happening around the province should ring alarm bells to everyone. The city of Hamilton, Mr Speaker, from whence you come every morning, has had I think some pretty poor experiences with the privatization of water. We know, and we have read in the paper over the last number of years, about the spills into Hamilton Harbour. We know what has happened with the quality of the water. We know that the company has been flipped several times, as to who is providing the services, and it is now in the hands of RWE, a very large water company in Hamilton with all the inherent difficulties of the flipping back and forth, the spillage, the problems that I would suggest have not happened in similar-sized jurisdictions in this country which have remained in public hands.

We have the problem in Goderich, Ontario, which has hired USFilter, a division of Vivendi, a company located and headquartered in France. Vivendi is the same company which has been investigated in France on six corruption cases in the years between 1989 and 1996 for operating a cartel. In fact, this same company is being investigated because they channelled 2% of all the monies they earned from operating water courses in France into political parties. I would suggest they have literally bought their way into providing water services. They have taken money from the public to provide ordinary water and have channelled it into political parties in that country not in order to further the interests of the people for whom they serve, but in order to further corporate interests. They are being investigated for that too.

You have the fact that Vivendi, in one of the jurisdictions where it has its major company, in the city of Tréguex in France, between 1990 and 1993 provided water unfit for human consumption or for any animal's consumption on 496 days in that three-year period. That is, in order to cut costs and make money, they have provided water that was unfit for consumption. That is a private company in France which is being investigated, as we speak, for the many problems they have caused those communities.

We have the problems in Sydney, Australia, which has been privatized by the company of Suez-Lyonnaise des

Eaux, and the problems in that jurisdiction are becoming well known. Probably the most important is that for two or three weeks running in Sydney, Australia, there was a problem with cryptosporidium, which is a water-borne virus that was found in the water in 1998. The company, Suez-Lyonnaise des Eaux, did not inform the general public and allowed them to continue drinking the water. The entire system had to be flushed and chlorinated, in a very large city, for any of those who have never been there. That was in order to save them money and potential lawsuits.

We have the entire problem of Great Britain. In Great Britain, although there have not been health hazards like there have been in France and in Sydney, Australia, or even dumping like there has been in Hamilton Harbour, there is the problem of higher costs. Water rates have skyrocketed since they were privatized. But even though the consumers are paying more, very little money, if any, is being put into better infrastructure. All of the money that is being made is going into corporate profits and not to service the people of Britain. The same companies that have privatized are now considered to be major sources of illegal sewage and dumping. They are also some of the prime offenders of environmental law in Great Britain. The people of Great Britain have not been served by privatization, and in fact there is quite a movement to look at going back.

My time is just about up. I would urge the members opposite to send this to committee, to do the right thing and to make the necessary changes that bring this in line with the report of Justice O'Connor, and to do the right thing with all of the recommendations.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Members now have up to two minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's always a pleasure to respond to the member from Beaches-East York. I really do admire him as a member. I've done some work on different opportunities with Mr Prue. I believe what he said and I think he's quite sincere about what he is saying. But I also believe this government is quite sincere in the intent of this legislation. I have it under every conceivable assurance. Our Minister of the Environment, Mr Stockwell, as well as our Premier, has indicated that this bill goes the full distance of implementing Justice O'Connor's decisions and recommendations.

I believe there will be circumstances, when I look at my riding of Durham—it's a very large geographic area. There will be important infrastructure decisions made in smaller communities that have community water systems, as well as smaller kinds of hamlets etc which may be made up of primarily wells or community wells. Water quality should not be second in any way to the issue of this government being there to make sure the right resources are there. But what this bill really does do—and later on today, those viewing should know, I will be addressing the bill. Stay tuned.

I believe there is an important amount of reporting to the ministry in a timely manner, that certain regulatory disciplines are followed by the upper-tier municipality. In

my area it's the region of Durham that really is responsible for water, and always has been. In fact, I've never sent one of my water bills to the province; they've always been to the region of Durham. So upper-tier municipalities, those from areas with a good assessment base, shouldn't have a problem at all. But I think in areas of the province that don't have the rich assessment base, there's certainly got to be room for discussion in looking forward to making sure we have the safest drinking water in all of Ontario.

**Mr Bisson:** My colleague certainly touched on a number of issues on this particular bill, but the one I want to just touch on quickly is the privatization aspect. As a social democrat, I don't believe that privatizing water systems—or privatizing government services, for that matter—is going to lead to any kind of savings. I don't believe it's going to lead to a safer drinking water system. I believe, quite frankly, that those services should stay within the public sector. They should be properly regulated by the province, they should be properly funded by the province when it comes to making sure that we maintain a good infrastructure, but at the end of the day it should be run by the public sector, and for a number of reasons I believe that.

**1640**

In every instance where we've seen this government, or for that matter other governments, go out and privatize entities that used to be controlled by the province and owned and operated by the province, there has yet to be really a case made where privatization has saved us any money. Back in 1996 this government “outsourced,” as they called it—privatized—road safety and road maintenance services across this province. They told us when they did this that we were going to save a bunch of money. Here we are some years later, now about six years after they privatized, and services are bad. We're now shutting down highways where we never have before. It's costing us more money, but what's worse is that when people call to complain about the state of the highway, there's little they can do, because it's run basically by private corporations.

In the case of water privatization, if there has been one disaster in England that everybody is unanimous on, it has been the privatization of water. Maggie Thatcher's legacy in England, which everybody is in unison on as having been a disaster, has been the privatization of water.

If you take a look at your own municipality, as you well know, Mr Speaker, in Hamilton there has been the privatization of water already. Look at what that has brought. It has brought a host of problems in that community.

So I say to the government across the way, privatization is not the way to fix this problem; it's by you taking responsibility as a government, properly regulating and properly funding the infrastructure for water in Ontario.

**Mr Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** It's a pleasure to rise in the House today to respond to the member from Beaches-

East York. I don't know what the calendar says, but the weather outside certainly makes one think of fall. I think really this is the first day of fall, beginning the beautiful colours we have in Ontario. When you look at the pristine countryside around Ontario during our fall season, you understand why it's so valuable for us to have good, high-quality water, because almost everything that touches our environment is controlled by water. This bill does that.

I was disappointed in some of the members' comments. They tend to look around the world and find the worst-case scenarios of water situations that are ill-defined as to how those things could be translated into the Ontario condition. I suppose it might be said that if we looked around the world at those scenarios that have come to pass, perhaps we may have learned a little bit from some of those situations to ensure that we have some of the best-quality water in the world.

I think this bill is particularly important because it puts a lot of responsibility on municipalities to ensure they maintain a high quality of water. It's very easy for a municipality to spend money on something that can be seen, like an arena or recreational centre or something like that, an arts centre. Sometimes it's a little more difficult for a municipality or an upper-tier government to spend money on something that can't be seen, something in the infrastructure under the streets.

I know the town of Milton has just recently renewed all of their water mains underground. For the past two summers the streets have been ripped up, the businesses have been upset, and the mayor has run constant interference. I think perhaps a little help on that would be of assistance.

**Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** I hadn't anticipated speaking on this, but I did wander into the House on it because it's a topic in which many members of this House have a considerable interest. I want to say to the member from Beaches-East York that I always appreciate your ability to put a historic perspective on some of the issues. We don't always agree, but it seems to me that you're more often than not well-researched. I suspect that comes from your very deep background in municipal politics and that sense of being in the trenches.

I think it was Bobby Kennedy who once said that good judgment is based on experience, and experience invariably on bad judgment. I think when it comes to water, particularly in Ontario, we see some case evidence of that. I think there's some merit in parts of what the government is doing, wanting to get on top of the water issue, cost recovery. Our own preference on this side of the House would be to do it in an all-party way, recognizing that we in fact haven't gone the full distance.

In his report, Justice O'Connor, in addition to talking about water being a cost-recoverable item—and I agree with Mr Chudleigh's comments about municipalities, often with the wrong priorities, perhaps not focusing enough. But notwithstanding that, the good justice also went on to talk very forcibly about the need for water to

remain in the public domain and his particular concern that smaller municipalities, those without a large assessment base, not be left short in terms of providing good, clean, potable water, our most precious liquid resource.

With that, I'm pleased to enter the debate and thank the member from Beaches-East York for his candid remarks.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. The member's time has expired. The member for Beaches-East York now has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr Prue:** I would like to thank the members from Durham, Timmins-James Bay, Halton and Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot. I can only hope that with some of these long names—I don't see the member here, but Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale is another one. I hope when they come up with the new boundaries, they somehow shorten the names so that they're better understood by all.

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** You have to respect local communities.

**Mr Prue:** And respect the local communities at the same time. That's why we have Beaches and East York, but I think two are enough. I'd like to thank the members and just talk very briefly.

Yes, I did speak about some of the worst cases, to the member from Halton, because I feel it is necessary to point out what some of the really bad privatizations have brought about. Undoubtedly, there may be some good ones somewhere; I'm simply not aware of them. Certainly we see that when problems develop, when one goes from the public domain where there are very few problems to the private domain, one needs to be very wary of what one is going to inherit and must make every reasonable effort to make sure that doesn't happen. In my own view, the best thing that can happen, as Justice O'Connor so rightly said, is to leave water, water sourcing, water testing, sewage and all of that in the public domain.

We have to come up with the best quality of water. We are blessed in this country with the highest percentage of water per capita of any people on the face of this earth. I forget what the statistic is. Something like 25% of all the fresh water in the world is in our country and if we have water that good and of that quality here, then we should be maximizing its use and ensuring that it stays that way.

Last but not least—well, no, I guess I've run out of time. I thank them all, Mr Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The floor is now open for further debate.

**Mr O'Toole:** It's my pleasure to stand on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment to spend some time discussing a very important initiative taken by the minister, Bill 175, An Act to respecting the cost of water and waste water services. It was introduced by the minister on September 23. In fact, there was a predecessor bill, Bill 155, which was introduced by the prior minister in the time of the Justice O'Connor report.

For those viewing, this bill is quite an effective short bill. It's some eight or nine pages, which really means that, since it's bilingual, it's probably about four pages long. It's got 26 sections, ranging from definitions down to full cost recovery of service and implying what that means. It's also a reporting mechanism to the Ministry of the Environment, revisions to reports and plans, enforcement mechanisms and general administrative issues with respect to that bill.

I can tell members present and those listening today that in my riding of Durham, last Thursday evening after the House recessed, I attended a meeting with the mayors and regional councillors of the region of Durham. One of the top issues was the press release by Mr John Steele of the Ministry of the Environment outlining some 22 charges with the region dating back, I might say, to around 2000-01. Many of them were more or less reporting issues. I think it's before the courts and I won't say anything more than that.

I was told by council that they were quite concerned, not about water quality or water safety issues so much as the mechanism of the press release coming from the ministry. They really hadn't had much advance notice. Their constituents were calling and immediately the reference point became Walkerton. We all know it was a tragedy which all of us were affected by to some extent. All of us were awakened to the cost of water and water quality in terms of lives and human health.

**1650**

Surprise, surprise: water is not free. That, to me, is important. Unfortunately, it took the Walkerton experience. As the member said earlier, I guess it was President Kennedy or somebody who said that good judgment is based on experience, and experience is often based on bad judgment. It's a very good way of saying that if you look at Walkerton, which was a publicly operated system, there was clearly very little accountability, from anything I heard during the inquiry. There were those involved in the administration and reporting who, in my view, did not do their jobs. You can't legislate against stupidity or ignorance, but in this legislation I think this government is trying to bring forth a mechanism to make sure we have good reporting, good accountability and good enforcement, to make sure that no longer are we able to accept anything but the best in terms of water quality.

I want to pay respect to our regional chair, Roger Anderson, whom I spoke with, as I said, as well as the mayor of Brock township, Terry Clayton; Doug Moffat, mayor of the municipality of Scugog; and Gerri Lynn O'Connor, mayor of the township of Uxbridge. All these people spoke to me directly on the issue I have just mentioned, and I have assured them that I will bring their concerns—that is, proper public communication with respect to these water reporting mechanisms—so we don't have outrage in the community based on information that may not relate to the water quality issue.

This particular bill primarily deals with a couple of things: the government's effort to ensure that residents

have access to clean, safe drinking water. We're committed to enforcing the best and toughest drinking water standards in the world, and must ensure Ontario's water supply and water services are safe and sustainable for the future. That component of the argument is very important.

I'm very pleased to take part in this debate and to represent the concerns of my constituents. I might say that my constituents represent a broad range of people on individual private wells and community wells, hamlets with a mixture of water services by the upper-tier government as well as private wells, and then the urban areas, which are generally serviced by the upper tier—the regional level of government is actually mandated to look after the water and the services.

The legislation continues the decisive action we have taken since the summer of 2000 to ensure safe, clean drinking water for all residents. We believe in Commissioner O'Connor's report on the Walkerton inquiry and, because of that, have committed to implement all the 121 recommendations he made. Let me restate that for those who are still paying attention: we believe in Commissioner O'Connor's report on the Walkerton inquiry, and we have committed to implementing all 121 recommendations.

We agree with him that sustainable municipal water and sewer financing is essential. It's the basis of the entire equation. Let me remind members that I haven't recently sent payment for one of my water bills to the province. It's been a municipal responsibility for many, many years. Sustainable financing makes for good planning. It promotes water conservation. As we have seen this past summer, with very little rain in certain periods, municipalities were taking proactive steps by encouraging people to water their lawns on odd-numbered days or other mechanisms. But the whole thing is raising the consciousness of sustainability and conservation, which are important measures.

I reminded you in my opening comments that water is not free. Everywhere I go today on the streets, specifically young people have two things in their hands: one is a cell phone, that of course should always be used hands-free, and the other is a bottle of water. I don't know what has happened, but certainly that's an indicator to me. When I see that, I know that part of this is that all of us want to have the safest, cleanest and most reliable form of drinking water possible. I know our Minister of the Environment is the very person to make sure this happens.

If passed, the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act would require all owners of these systems to undertake a full cost accounting of their water and sewage systems. Detailed analysis would include all operating and capital costs and all sources of revenue and the investment required to maintain and indeed expand these systems.

Bill 175 would also require system owners to develop comprehensive asset management reports and then provide a plan for implementing full cost recovery.

If passed, we would implement this bill in two stages. The first step is aimed at assessing the full cost of water and sewage services in each municipality. The second phase would involve bringing full cost recovery forward in a way that makes sense for each municipality.

I have every assurance that our Premier will make sure we work in a co-operative pattern with each lower-tier and upper-tier municipality.

Justice O'Connor said, "In my opinion, if passed into law, the act will address many of the important issues concerning the financing of water systems.... The requirements for a full cost report and cost recovery plan, as generally expressed in this proposed act, are in my view appropriate." That's very important, and indeed it responds to recommendations 47 and 48, for those who have actually reviewed that very comprehensive set of reports.

Justice O'Connor also strongly supports the implementation of asset management and full cost recovery plans in relation to drinking water treatment and distribution systems.

I know this bill is not new to the members of this Legislature. First introduced in December 2001 by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Chris Hodgson, who's here today, along with the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Transportation—they're actually on duty—the Ministry of the Environment is now bringing a bill forward in keeping with Premier Eves's announcement in August, "I will have responsibility for leading Ontario's comprehensive strategy." I'm confident that it will be comprehensive.

There is good reason for tabling this act at this time. In the months since the previous bill was tabled, the Walkerton Inquiry concluded. Commissioner O'Connor made far-reaching recommendations, as members of this House know full well, and we're implementing all of them.

Consultation, of course, is essential. As we have done with the proposed Safe Drinking Water Act and are currently doing with regulations for the Nutrient Management Act, we will continue to engage and encourage public and stakeholder involvement throughout the entire process. In fact, in my view, we've adopted a strategy which I call continuous improvement. I believe the Red Tape Commission has gone a long way toward making sure that regulations, indeed statutes, have a threshold for constant review and improvement.

Moving forward, we will hold extensive meetings with our municipal partners and others to ensure that decisions made on this bill make sense. I have every assurance from the minister that we're prepared to listen and respond. We want to hear from people who will be most directly affected. They have the experience and indeed the judgment to come up with needed solutions. Our government, the Ernie Eves government, is investing more than half a billion dollars in the next two years on clean, safe drinking water for all people of Ontario. Let me repeat that: we've committed half a billion dollars in the next two years.



I often stop and have to ask, where's the federal government on this issue? The Great Lakes, the water systems that feed into and out of Ontario—they're absolutely silent. As usual, I'm very suspicious of where they are on this issue. In fact, for many years the Canada-Ontario infrastructure programs have been a really substantive part of building that infrastructure. That's federal-provincial money, and I believe they have to come to the table and make a commitment for those very expensive components of a proper water treatment and water delivery system.

The government will deliver on its budget commitment to establish the \$50-million clean water legacy trust and the Clean Water Centre of Excellence in Walkerton to provide access to the best scientific knowledge, research and technology and training in the management and monitoring of our safe drinking water.

I know Mr Murdoch, the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, along with the Minister of the Environment, was there.

Someone has their cellphone on, and I'd ask them to stop distracting me and other members of the House. I'll have to collect my thoughts here. Wayne is coming to have the member removed, and I support that. I'm giving a running commentary here.

To date, our government has provided municipalities and conservation authorities with over \$14 million to conduct groundwater studies—just the beginning. This government is working to build the strongest and most reliable infrastructure in this province by forming partnerships, I might say, as an important part of the solution. It's the largest investment in groundwater source protection in the province's history, and I know a part of that money went to my riding of Durham. Just looking at my notes here, this of course is Agriculture Week. Bert Johnson, the MPP for Perth-Middlesex, is hosting a reception tomorrow morning on that issue. I also know there was a groundwater celebration—I think it was maybe last week; yes, it was—educating young children. Our province is part of educating young people about the importance of safe water and safe groundwater.

**1700**

In addition, the government launched a \$6-million provincial groundwater monitoring network in co-operation with Conservation Ontario, its member authorities and municipalities across the province. It's time that all of us started considering the true cost of water and sewage services that we've often taken for granted. It's the only way we can ensure these services will be there to support the health and prosperity of future generations.

I encourage members of this Legislature to strongly support the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act as well as any amendments that come forward during these consultations.

You know, I have in my duties as an elected member the responsibility to listen. People have asked me about the Justice O'Connor report, and I have shared an abbreviated version—it's quite voluminous, as you know—with constituents in a sort of lending library ser-

vice. Call my constituency office any time, and we will always respond with service above and beyond the standard.

**Mr Gill:** Web site too?

**Mr O'Toole:** I have a web site, as the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale—the longest riding name, I believe, in Canada—

**Mr Gill:** Thank you.

**Mr O'Toole:** And the best member.

**Mr Gill:** That's more like it.

**Mr O'Toole:** Recommendations: I often refer to some very important parts. This is right out of Justice O'Connor's report: "The provincial government should require municipalities to submit a financial plan for their water system, in accordance with provincial standards, as a condition of licence for their water systems."

Recommendation 48: "As a general principle, municipalities should plan to raise adequate resources for their water systems from local revenue sources, barring exceptional circumstances."

I fully recognize that for small, assessment-poor municipalities that have systems that are fragile, aging and maybe not well monitored, the time has come that we have to work in co-operation with those municipalities. I would be fully supportive of finding a mechanism to make sure support is there—longer-term, interest-free loans—encouraging them to make the investments, the decisions, and take the right steps to make sure we have, as our Premier said, the safest drinking water in the world. That's what Ontario expects, that's what Canadians have come to expect and that's what we've always felt, and it took a wake-up call for all of us. I say a wake-up call because Walkerton was exactly that, an unnecessary and tragic circumstance, but this government responded.

I can put on the record here that it's my understanding in researching this topic that in the 1980s—1987, 1988 and after that—there were four or five years when there were reports filed that well number six at Walkerton was contaminated. I don't think it ever operated properly. Now, I'm not a justice and I'm not a scientist, except a political scientist, if that's science—but then, that's a whole argument for another day. Minister Sterling, the Minister of Transportation, is shaking his head. Of course, he's an engineer as well as a lawyer, so I should have checked out the speech with him.

My point here is that it's clear now, after the wake-up call, previous governments did not respond. By that I mean they were told and there was no mechanism or structure in place to make sure people were notified. Since that tragedy, I'm convinced there is a mechanism in place, and I see it no more clearly than in my riding of Durham.

I want to refer in my concluding time to a press release of September 23 from the Ministry of the Environment:

"The Ernie Eves government is moving forward with water and sewer legislation to ensure clean, safe drinking water for Ontario residents, and plans to consult broadly

with stakeholders, Environment Minister Chris Stockwell announced in the Legislature today.

“The new Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act would make it mandatory for municipalities to assess and cost-recover the full amount of water and sewer services. The legislation was ... introduced by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as Bill 155. It has been reintroduced by Stockwell to give legal authority to the Ministry of the Environment, as announced by the Premier in August 2002. Commissioner Dennis O’Connor, in his part two report, indicated that he originally envisioned this.

“‘We are listening to our stakeholders,’ said Stockwell. ‘And we’re driving ahead on our commitment to the principles of full-cost accounting and recovery—key aspects of Commissioner O’Connor’s recommendations.’

“In the second part of his report on the Walkerton inquiry, Commissioner O’Connor made several references to the need for municipalities to ensure that their water systems are adequately financed. The reintroduction of the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act is the government’s next step in fulfilling the commissioner’s recommendations.

“The government also plans to introduce early this fall a proposed Safe Drinking Water Act, which would deliver on 50 of 93 recommendations from Part Two: Report of the Walkerton Inquiry.

“‘We all need to know the true cost of the water and sewer services we take for granted,’ said Stockwell. ‘It’s the only way we can ensure that these services will be there to support the health and prosperity of future generations.’

“The proposed Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act would be implemented in two stages,” as I said earlier. “The first would be aimed at assessing the full cost of water and sewage services for municipalities. The second would” be to involve “bringing full-cost accounting forward in a way that makes sense for municipalities.

“On August 22 ... Premier Ernie Eves announced that Minister Stockwell would focus on leading” our “government’s comprehensive water strategy, which includes responsibility for dealing with the issues around the financing of water and sewer systems.”

I’m convinced that members here will support this bill. I believe it’s the right thing to do; in fact, it’s the only thing to do. We need to have the safest drinking water, not just for ourselves, but for our children and our elderly and for all citizens in this province. I encourage every member to listen closely and support this legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Members now have up to two minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I am sure that everyone, every individual in this Legislature and everyone in this province, shares the desire that we have safe drinking water. To the extent that this bill does that, I am supportive of it. But there are three areas that concern me and my constituents that I’d like to make comment on.

The majority of constituents that have spoken to me, or when I’ve raised this with them—one area is that of being publicly owned. I haven’t heard anyone who has commented to me that they did not prefer—and in fact asked—that all water delivery services to the public in this province be publicly owned so that there is accountability.

Secondly, that they be publicly operated—and I can give you an example. The Union Water System in part of my riding is a shared water system that originally developed with the cooperation of the private sector and the H.J. Heinz Co and the municipalities. That water system is operated by OCWA, the clean water agency in Ontario—again, a public body that, through the government, is accountable.

The third area that’s of concern is full cost recovery. I understand that there is a desire to have these systems not operate at a loss, but I think full cost recovery should also include grants from the provincial government to those municipalities that find these rules and regulations unaffordable.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Timmins-James—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. You don’t just stand up and make remarks and then sit down and start heckling.

*Interjection.*

1710

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the opposition House leader wish to make an issue of this?

**Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair):** No, sir.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I didn’t think so.

The member for Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr Bisson:** I just listened to the comments made by my colleague cross the way. Some of the comments I can agree with. All of us in the province, no matter what our political persuasion might be, want to make sure that we have safe drinking water, so many of the issues he raised were like motherhood issues that I don’t think anybody can disagree with. But I think the nub of the question becomes, how are we going to make sure that municipalities have the money to be able to follow what’s set out in this legislation? You know as well as I do that your government has downloaded much in the way of responsibility on to municipalities. That has made it more difficult for them to be able to administer some of the existing regulations when it comes to water. You will know, for example, that regulations that were put in place I guess about a year and a half ago, two years ago, right after the Walkerton disaster, that I would argue your government was responsible for—basically a lot of municipalities can’t even meet those regulations because they don’t have the dollars to be able to do the kind of stuff that has to be done to their water or sewer treatment plants or their infrastructure that’s in the ground.

So I have no argument with what you’re trying to do in the legislation as far as setting up a framework to be able to make sure they have safe drinking water, but I’ve got a difficulty in how you want people to pay for this. I

would argue it's the provincial government's responsibility, along with the municipal governments, to properly fund and properly regulate drinking water in the province of Ontario and how we discharge effluent through our sewer systems.

But then I would go the other step. I would argue that it's not by allowing privatization that we're going to be able to fix this problem. Look at what's happened with hydro. Let's take a look at what's happened with everything else. When it comes to privatizing, there's yet a case to be made that we saved any money on privatization. So if you want to get into a debate about how we're going to find a way to properly fund these systems by way of public dollars, that's one I'm engaged to debate with you and to work with you.

**Mr Gill:** It is a pleasure to take part in the debate this afternoon and perhaps make some comments to the comments made by the member for Durham as well as the responses made to the member's comments by the members for Essex and Timmins-James Bay. I think in the heckling the member for Timmins-James Bay made some reference to the difference in the ridings in terms of the geographic area. I know his riding is a huge riding and he has to fly all over in his nice plane that he has, which is very nice.

The member for Timmins-James Bay also mentioned that the problems we had about the water are the government's responsibility. I'm hoping that he's not saying that the problem we had in Saskatchewan is also the Ontario government's problem. These are problems, as the member for Durham said—well number 6, I'm trying to refer back to his comments, I think he said for years was acting up. I don't have any proof of that, but that's what I heard in the notes. Indeed, Walkerton was a wake-up call, a wake-up call in the sense of the systems having been set up; if nobody's going to follow them, we're going to run into these kinds of problems. So it's very important to have good systems. At the same time, it's very important to have the follow-up of the procedures as they are set up.

Again, I think somebody talked about water-bottling standards. It's very important to have standards. There are places in the world where you go and purchase water and you think you're buying the best quality there is and sometimes those bottles even are recycled somewhere. So I think it's very important to make sure that we have the standards and procedures in place and we have the personnel trained to follow those procedures.

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** It is great to hear this new-found interest in safe water. The reality, though, is we got into trouble because money that needed to be spent on water was not, and restoring water to be safe in Ontario will require money. What we need to recognize is that there are costs that are common to water systems no matter what the size. Whether it's a water system for Toronto or a water system for Deseronto, there are certain fixed costs that become very efficient when you have a lot of people connected to the system but become prohibitively expensive for small

places like Ameliasburg and Deseronto and Wellington and in subdivisions like Montrose Road subdivision in my community. They simply don't have the resources to provide safe water. If the government truly believes in it, they have to recognize that not all systems can run at the same costs per capita. They have to come in and assist on such a vital thing.

I've had a number of calls and visits from constituents who own or reside in manufactured housing communities—very small water systems with maybe only 20 or 25 households—yet they have to meet the same standards, and rightfully so, of the water that's being drunk everywhere else. But economically it would be a killer, and in fact there is a potential that it removes some very affordable housing for our citizens.

The other half of the equation, which is as important—in fact, more important—is that we're directed at cleaning up the water. Let's stop making the water polluted. We need to make sure that what goes into our groundwater is not going to have a bad effect.

I would suggest as an example the dump at Napanee that they are proposing to expand. Here's a dumpsite where this government said, "We don't even need to do a full environmental assessment. We can shorten that up, and hopefully nothing will come of it." We can't live on "hopefully nothing will." If this dump does in fact ever have leachate come out, it will flow into the Bay of Quinte. That flows into Lake Ontario, and so all the municipalities that draw water from the St Lawrence River and Lake Ontario will have to spend money to take out what should never have gone in.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr O'Toole:** I'm pleased to respond to the members for Essex, Timmins-James Bay, Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale, and Prince Edward-Hastings. I appreciate their comments.

The member for Timmins-James Bay, I believe, was the one who mentioned the word "downloading." He should know—he's been here a couple of terms—that it has never been a provincial responsibility to send your water bill in. The province has always been part of the solution on the capital side of building plants, operating and maintenance on an ongoing basis where there is a lower tier.

I could also agree that once you get into the idea of full cost and full cost recovery, you have to address the whole convoluted argument of conservation and sustainability. We live on a private well at my house, so I've always told the children to cut down the showering time; don't leave the tap running just because it sounds good. When something's free, you tend to abuse it, so I think we have to find the balance there.

As for the member for Prince Edward-Hastings, I'm surprised at how little he actually knows about this issue. I hate to be personal, but it did come up. He's talking about the full cost recovery part and how he's against it, but at the same time recognizing municipalities have those systems today. What we've asked in part one, if

he's listening, is that they have to do a plan. I think, for anyone listening to the Walkerton inquiry, that's the only responsible thing for elected people to be doing. The Premier has committed to working with the lower-tier and smaller, assessment-poor municipalities to make sure we find the proper mechanisms and strategies to meet those needs. So I think I hear a lot of agreement on the other side.

Some of it is pure ignorance and lack of understanding, but if they listen to the debate, they will be supportive of this bill for the right reasons: that each of us, very young and very old, deserves to have the safest drinking water in the world. I think you've got to listen to this bill and support it. It's the right thing to do.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The floor is open for further debate.

**Mr Duncan:** Before I begin my remarks, may I indicate that I'll be sharing my time with the member for Algoma-Manitoulin.

Let me begin by just reminding the member for Durham about Justice O'Connor. It's good to see the government quoting so extensively from him, because you and your government stonewalled even having that commission in the first instance. I remember him heckling the opposition in this House at the time we were pushing for it. Had we not pushed for it, these recommendations would never have been brought forward. When one starts tossing those kinds of misquotes back at this side of the House, one ought to reflect on what's been said in the past. The member for Durham and the government of which he is a part resisted for, I believe, almost a week the appointment of an inquiry in any event to look into the tragedy at Walkerton. The Hansard record fully reflects that.

I want to talk briefly about the bill. First of all, we will oppose this bill unless it's amended. As House leader, let me say to the government that we hope to have the opportunity to have hearings on this bill so that we can put amendments to try to make the bill a better bill that will be more acceptable so that, hopefully, we can vote for it if the amendments are adopted by the Legislature eventually.

1720

We support the principle of full cost accounting for our water and sewer systems. My colleague from Prince Edward-Hastings acknowledged that a moment ago, contrary to what the member for Durham said. We also believe that after the tragedy in Walkerton, consumers of water in Ontario are prepared to pay the full cost of water. We have to be careful that we set up the system in a way that allocates those costs fairly and shares them in a way that doesn't prejudice one part of the province or another, or rural and small areas versus larger areas.

Consequently, we see the need for some amendments to this bill. If the government is serious in its intention to bring forward good legislation, they'll do what they did in the case of the Walkerton inquiry in the first instance, and that is to listen to the recommendations of the opposition, and the first is to send this to committee.

We will be requesting amendments in the following areas: (1) that we prohibit municipalities from selling off their water and sewer systems to the private sector—it's not entirely clear to us in this bill that there is any provision for that at all; (2) that we provide some form of financial support for water and sewer infrastructure for smaller communities; and (3) we want to ensure that higher water rates do not become a burden to low-income families and seniors.

This is especially appropriate today. Most people began receiving this month's hydro bills late last week. The phones in my office have been going quite steadily. I recall in the debate around deregulation and privatization of hydro that the consumer would be protected, that this would not bring about higher rates. As of last week, and again not until the leader of my party, Dalton McGuinty, and our energy critic, Michael Bryant, raised the issue, we've discovered to our amazement that this government was trying to back off on the rebate it had promised. After a little bit of pressure, the government now again apparently has flip-flopped, changed their mind, and they're going to insist on this rebate.

I don't even want to start into a discussion about Union Gas tonight, it's not appropriate to this bill, but let me say that as of about an hour ago I have received in excess of 5,000 electronic letters from Union Gas consumers with respect to retroactive price increases that have been forced upon them by the Ontario Energy Board and the Ernie Eves government.

This bill lays out a framework for the implementation of full cost accounting and asset management for municipal water-sewer systems, and it does form part of the response to Walkerton, and I think it is important. Colleagues opposite mentioned Justice O'Connor's support of the predecessor bill to this, Bill 155. He does say quite clearly at page 299 in part two of the report, "The requirements for a full cost report and cost recovery plan, as generally expressed in the proposed act, are ... appropriate." What my colleagues opposite forgot to tell you, didn't mention, was what Justice O'Connor went on to say on page 299: that he believes "the regulations ... will be critical" to this legislation.

Let me take a moment, on that basis, to talk about the regulations, and again what's silent in this bill; that is, what we basically have to surrender to the government after the legislation is passed, with no opportunity for meaningful public input. First of all, the definition of "water services providers"—there are thousands of small-scale water providers, things like trailer camps, summer resorts, communal water systems, but it appears likely that those entities will be exempt from the act. In addition, there's a concern that private water companies will be included under the definition, which in effect would open the door for greater involvement by the private sector in drinking water systems. Defining what the full costs are that must be recovered—that is silent in the legislation—will be determined in regulation. Before we would be comfortable in supporting this bill or any other bill, we would have to be satisfied of that.

Then, establishing the contents of municipal reports and plans: again, Justice O'Connor called for these. Now it's important that we set them up in the way he intended or envisioned that they be set up. We have not been satisfied with respect to that issue. And then finally setting deadlines and time frames for compliance.

In the remaining moments I have I did want to speak about the importance of the public-private issue in delivering clean drinking water because the Minister of Transportation was in here saying, "Oh, it was publicly owned when Walkerton happened," but I want to remind him what Justice O'Connor said about this crucial issue. He supports the position that we're advocating; that is, that the private sector can have a role in the operation and management of water systems but that ownership of the systems must remain public.

What he said is, "In not recommending the sale of municipal water systems to the private sector, my conclusion is based on several considerations: the essentially local character of water services"—and this again relates back to what we've talked about in terms of the potentially harmful effects this could have on our smaller and rural municipalities—"the natural monopoly characteristics of the water industry"—not unlike, I might say, Union Gas and the delivery of natural gas products in this province, and we have seen over the course of the last two weeks what can happen when this industry is not properly regulated. The third point he makes is "the importance of maintaining accountability to local residents." Accountability was part of the reason why Walkerton fell apart. I acknowledge there was a lack of accountability on the part of the local people, but there was also a clear lack of accountability here at Queen's Park and in the government. And finally Justice O'Connor references the "historical role of municipalities in this field." That in my view is not the most compelling, but I do believe he laid out a compelling case for blocking the privatization of the sale of our water services.

In conclusion, we believe the bill is flawed. I've cited three areas we'd like to bring forward amendments on. Those amendments can only be brought forward in committee or committee of the whole. As House leader, I make representation to the government now that we would like to have this bill in committee and we would like to have the opportunity to amend it and discuss those amendments in committee so that hopefully we could bring back a bill from committee that this party could endorse.

With that, I'll yield the floor to my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin):** I am pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak to this bill. Probably over the last two to three years there has been no issue that has affected my constituency, and particularly the municipalities within the riding, more than the issue of clean, safe water. That is because critical mass is something that we in Algoma-Manitoulin don't have. It doesn't exist. We have small water sys-

tems, small municipal water systems and small water systems within unincorporated areas that are operated that have no critical mass. And while we're talking about this, I guess one of our main concerns in Algoma-Manitoulin is to understand how small water systems are to be able to afford the full cost accounting. We know on the capital side that it has been inadequate. The government has come forward with various programs but they don't approach programs that even this government was delivering some two years ago.

I remind my constituents of the upgrading of the facilities in the township of Sable-Spanish, particularly in the old town of Massey. In that particular instance, the community received almost 90% of the capital costs of upgrading that water system. We're very thankful for that, and we're very thankful to the provincial treasury. That does not happen any more. The maximum capital available to small municipalities from the province of Ontario appears to be now, in my part of the world, 50%, which is considerably different than the former 90% available to those very, very small municipalities that I represent. That means full cost accounting to new upgrades will mean substantially more money. We are fortunate in that the federal government has provided, for the first time the history of Ontario, a further grant of about one third. But it still falls below what was formerly offered by the province, and I think members should understand that.

**1730**

I think they should also understand that in some of my very small water systems—I look, for example, at Peace Tree, which is almost across from my office in Heyden. Each consumer in that very small water system is paying \$25 a month for testing. That doesn't get you any water; it doesn't get you any clean water. It gets you nothing but the testing. I'm told they're going to be required to spend \$300,000 to \$400,000 to upgrade that very small system. Without some significant assistance, I don't know how that's going to happen.

I've looked at the municipalities within my constituency that are all in this situation. We have Michipicoten. Wawa, the township where the goose sits proudly at the edge of the highway, is looking at \$6 million or \$7 million of upgrades in their municipality. The township of White River is looking at a very significant bill. Gore Bay is looking at a large number of dollars. The town of Bruce Mines, which by the way has now been boiling water for two years, is looking at a significant expenditure. Thessalon, Assiginack and quite a number of others are looking at large expenditures.

When you start talking about full costs, the operators of those very small systems are very concerned. And that's not even to take issue with the 2,500 private water systems that exist across northern Ontario—2,500 small, private systems. Within that there are mobile home parks with literally hundreds of residents. Those private owners cannot afford to upgrade their water systems to the standards required by this bill; obviously they should. If these trailer parks close, there will be no place for these

people to live. I have two or three of those very close to my constituency office, and they are now facing hydro bills that have doubled—I say again—doubled since deregulation occurred.

If you speak to the people of the former Great Lakes Power Co service area about electrical bills, you're going to find people scratching their heads about how some of this deregulation works. As we all know in this House, Great Lakes Power is a private company and has always been a private company. That private company has provided the wires, the transformers and the generation plants to provide electricity in the area of Algoma and Sault Ste Marie for decades. Presumably, they have always made a profit doing it.

We know that the cost to the customers of Great Lakes Power has always been less than it has been in surrounding areas served by Hydro One. So we have a private company providing a service at 10% or 15% lower than its public competitor in the Hydro One area. With deregulation, Great Lakes Power, the private company, is now more expensive than Hydro One.

I'm having a hard time believing that any government could deregulate a private company into a position where they have seen a doubling of their revenues to provide exactly the same thing. I am very concerned that with water services we are going to see exactly the same sort of incredible increases in the price of water. We're seeing it in the price of electricity; we probably will be seeing it in the price of water.

My very small community of Kagawong—up until very recently, my bill at home for having municipal water service was \$150 a year. That was very reasonable, I would guess. I think most of you would say that. Two years ago it doubled, to \$300. Still, it's a very good price or value, I would suggest. This year I have had to write a cheque, as did all the other customers of the municipality's water system, of an additional \$150 to pay for repairs that were made last year and the year before. I see by the paper that we are facing, in that particular water system, which serves about 100 customers, about \$450,000 of additional expenditure to bring the system up to standard. Clearly, we want that to happen. The issue is, how much will we have to pay to operate that system over time, and is it affordable?

I want to bring to members' attention what Mr Justice O'Connor has said in his report of the Walkerton inquiry. Mr Justice O'Connor says, "The challenge lies not in making small systems safe; technically, this is rarely difficult. Rather, the challenge lies in doing so affordably. ... I make recommendations regarding the minimum safe operating requirements for three categories of small systems and point to some ways in which technology and good management can keep costs to a reasonable level." But he goes on to say that it is incumbent upon the province of Ontario to make sure that these smaller systems are affordable.

I think in the area I represent, we are quickly coming to the point where it is unaffordable. When you look at electricity rates; when you look at the increases in

property taxes across much of the area of 15% to 20% this year; when you look at fees for water systems that are doubling or tripling; when you look at the cost of heating oil, of replacing oil tanks; when you look at the costs that are being burdened upon the small, rural Ontarian, what you are finding is that we cannot afford to live in our part of the world any more. We have senior citizens, people on fixed incomes. We have farmers with electrical bills doubling. If you're a dairy farmer, that is a real problem.

**Mr John C. Cleary (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh):** More than doubled.

**Mr Brown:** More than doubled, my friend from Cornwall says. It's just one more attack on rural Ontario, on northern Ontario.

So I'm very concerned that in the title of this bill, when it says "full costs," what they really are saying is, "more costs, less value," and that this government intends to again download on northern people.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Members now have up to two minutes for questions, comments.

**Mr Prue:** I listened to the two speakers, one on television and one in person, and would commend them for what they had to say.

Dealing with the issue of privatization, I think much has been said on this side of the House on the trepidation that people feel about privatization and what it involves and costs going up, and the fact that one does not really feel safe with a private company, no matter how well regulated, knowing full well they are in business to make a profit and may cut corners in order to do so.

The real issue here for the government, I would suggest, is that we need to ensure that those municipalities which are financially capable of doing so implement a full cost recovery scheme. Full cost recovery will ensure that the actual cost of delivering the water and treating it at the end is made so that the water does not become a free commodity but in fact people pay for the value of that which they use. It will encourage conservation.

1740

I can only speak back to my mayoral days in East York. We had full cost recovery. We insisted that people pay the full cost for every drop of water that came from the taps. In fact, our municipality, of the six in Metropolitan Toronto, as it then was, had the highest water rate. We were unabashedly proud of charging that, although some of our ratepayers from time to time would complain they could get cheaper water if they lived in Scarborough or in Toronto. We assured them that we would repair the pipes and make sure that the water remained safe. I think that is what's necessary for the overwhelming majority. For small towns, I do agree with the member for Algoma-Manitoulin: they are going to need assistance. We cannot depopulate the north; we cannot depopulate rural areas. Something is going to have to be done to ensure that those towns have affordable water as they implement full cost recovery.

**Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I would like to compliment the member for Algoma-Manitoulin for

the constructive tone that he brought to this debate. He highlighted a number of very important issues in his constituency. I represent a rural constituency, as he does, with many small towns with serious water problems as well. I think the views that he brought forward this afternoon were very helpful in the context of this overall debate.

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I'm pleased to make comments and congratulate the members for Windsor-St Clair and Algoma-Manitoulin on the fine points they made in the debate this afternoon on Bill 175.

I agree with both of the speakers that hearings should be held on an issue as significant as water in Ontario today after the happenings that we've witnessed over the past many months: tragedy, the lack of funding and putting people's lives at risk.

I want to pick up on the comment made about the cost of water, in particular as it applies to rural Ontario. My riding has a significant portion of rural situations and I know and hear constantly from citizens about the cost of water as it applies to residential usage and, of course, small businesses. Small businesses have told me that in situations where municipal water is being brought to their area currently, the cost is prohibitive. Some have said that they are going to close completely.

I don't have time to discuss in total the issue of rural water wells and how it applies to multiple users, but therein lies part of the problem. Those residents have come to me and asked, "Why doesn't the government help us in this situation of funding?" They say, "What happened to the water protection fund?" of sometime back in 1997. What happened to that water protection fund? It seemed to dry up. It disappeared.

I wrote to successive ministers and asked them to help in particular rural Ontario but certainly all persons who were requiring assistance in terms of water.

It seems today that the government has totally mismanaged the issues surrounding hydro, natural gas, water and, as I heard this weekend, the use of gasoline. Gasoline prices have also skyrocketed in Ontario.

**Mr Chudleigh:** It's always a pleasure to listen to the member for Algoma-Manitoulin, who is a great constituency representative of those wonderful people in that North Channel area. It's certainly one of the most beautiful places in Ontario and a place with a tremendous amount of good, clean, pure water, something that is increasingly rare in this world. Transferring that wonderful situation that you have there to the rest of Ontario would be a wonderful thing for any government to pursue. That's exactly what this government is pursuing: to ensure that the rest of the people in Ontario have exactly the same quality of water that those people in the north have.

The member for Windsor-St Clair talked about the doom and gloom that this bill is going to bring forth. Personally I don't know how you can expect to have high-quality water now or in the future unless you have complete cost recovery of the systems that you put in the ground, because without that cost recovery you can't

afford to replace it; you can't afford to keep it up; you can't afford to put the kinds of resources into it that it needs in order to operate at peak efficiency.

That's what this bill does. It makes all kinds of sense to me to have this kind of system in place so that we can all enjoy the kind of pure quality of water that the people in Algoma-Manitoulin take for granted, as well they should. It's a beautiful part of the country.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Algoma-Manitoulin has up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr Brown:** I'd like to thank the members from Halton, Waterloo-Wellington, Chatham-Kent-Essex and Beaches-East York for their constructive comments.

I would just tell the member from Halton that of course I also represent about half of the Lake Superior shoreline. It is at least as incredible, if not more so, than the North Channel area. We do have lots of water, and that's why we're very concerned about this issue.

My colleague from Chatham-Kent-Essex pointed to the need for amendments to this act before we could support it. I want to suggest here and now that we need more than that. I have seen what has happened to the electricity regime in this province, the unbelievable doubling of prices under the regulatory framework that has been put forward—

**Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** Because we had to buy most of it in the summer.

**Mr Brown:** Oh, you've got a lot to say, Minister of Northern Development, with mills in this province paying 110% more than they did before you messed this thing up.

What we need to see is the regulations that go with this bill. There were governments that provided the regulations before this House was asked to give a bill third reading. There were governments that did decide to go to committee after second reading, provide the regulations to the members because often the devil is in the details. We've seen that with bill after bill and the execution of those pieces of legislation and the effects on the people of Ontario. This bill has sat on the order paper for some time under a different number and under a different minister, but essentially it's the same bill. Bring forward not only some productive amendments; show us the regulations. Show us what you really have in mind.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The floor is now open for further debate.

**Mr Chudleigh:** I'm pleased to take part in this debate on Bill 175, the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act. This issue is of the utmost importance as we look forward to a future of clean water and sustainable infrastructure in this great province of Ontario.

The proposed bill will continue the purposeful and determined action this government has taken since the summer of 2000. It clearly shows we are committed to sparing no effort so that the residents of Ontario have access to clean, safe drinking water now and in the future. As you have heard time and again, safe drinking water is a non-negotiable priority for this government.

We will be relentless in its pursuit and vigilant in its protection.

If passed into law, the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act will set another benchmark and provide an even stronger foundation for safe drinking water. It makes for good planning, promotes water conservation and is an integral part of this government's clean water strategy.

Commissioner O'Connor was supportive of full cost pricing and full cost recovery. To quote the commissioner directly, he said, "In my opinion, if passed into law, the act will address many of the important issues concerning the financing of water systems. The requirements for a full-cost report and cost-recovery plan as generally expressed in the proposed act are, in my view, appropriate."

In his report, Commissioner O'Connor made far-reaching recommendations. As members of this House know, we fully support the recommendations and are moving forward to implement every single one of them. While we will not carry on with our comprehensive consultation process, we will continue to meet with our key stakeholders to help review the proposed legislation and to seek their input in making the legislation fair but very firm.

Legislating full cost accounting and recovery for municipal water and sewage services through the proposed bill is one of the best ways to protect public health and our environment. It provides us with an accurate picture and an effective method of identifying all of the operational and capital costs that are associated with water and sewage services.

**1750**

In his report, Commissioner O'Connor supported the need for municipalities to ensure that their water systems are adequately financed. He said that in the long run our safety depends on "stable and adequate financing to maintain a water system's infrastructure and its operational capacity to supply high-quality water consistently." A broader issue, however, to relate to the subject of infrastructure financing and cost recovery is the principle of municipal accountability.

In the new Municipal Act, now about a year old, municipalities were given increased flexibility. But a strong accountability framework has also been put in place to balance that increased flexibility. On behalf of taxpayers, our goal should always be to provide the best service and clear accountability. One way to help ensure this is through the use of performance measurements.

The municipal performance measurement program requires all municipalities to collect data and measure their performance on 35 specific measures that fall within nine core municipal service areas. The data is then included in the municipality's financial information return. As of September 2001, they have been required to report to the public on 16 of those measures.

A provision in the proposed act would require municipalities to report to taxpayers annually on any service delivery improvements and any identified barriers to

improving service delivery. The concept of full cost accounting and recovery as set out in the proposed act is also consistent with municipal accountability for budget processes. Better communications, increased awareness and more consistent financial and full cost accounting processes will strengthen a municipality's position in terms of knowing exactly where they stand today. They will know the real cost of their water and sewer services. It will allow them to take a proactive view and adopt a more integrated and holistic approach to environmental protection.

If passed, the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act will make it mandatory for municipalities to assess and cost-recover the full amount of water and sewer services. It will ensure that water and sewer services generate sufficient revenues to fully recover all their long-term operating and capital costs. The proposed act would be implemented in two stages. The first stage would involve assessing the full cost of water and sewage services in each municipality. The second stage would involve bringing full cost recovery forward in a way that makes sense for that municipality.

The concept of full cost recovery is not new to municipalities. They have been able to apply full cost recovery in the past if they wished. In fact, some municipalities implemented this to varying degrees. The trouble is that even though some municipalities may be recovering full costs, they don't know the extent to which they are recovering all their long-term investment needs. That is precisely what this proposed act will address: future sustainability. The proposed act will give us the full picture of what it costs municipalities to provide water and waste water services by requiring municipalities to do cost accounting according to a regulated standard.

The reality is that most municipalities do not have a handle on the long-term costs of maintaining their water and sewer systems. This often leads to under-investment in these systems, because much of the infrastructure is below ground. The problem is further perpetuated by deferred maintenance and over-consumption by users. Failing infrastructure puts public health at risk. We cannot abide that in this province, and the proposed bill will make health and clean water priorities.

One more recent step this government has taken to protect drinking water was to enact legislation that would govern how certain nutrients are handled on farms across this province. This House will recall the passage of the Nutrient Management Act, which was given royal assent this past June. It is aimed at providing the best possible protection for the environment while ensuring the continued viability of farming. The act will help manage the use of all the different types of nutrients, including livestock manure, pulp and paper sludge and municipal biosolids to prevent environmental and health impacts.

The land application of materials containing nutrients is governed by an array of legislation and regulatory provisions. Some are guidelines, others are voluntary best management practices and then there is a patchwork of municipal bylaws. Regulations developed and imple-



mented under the Nutrient Management Act will address this.

In the May 2002 throne speech it was stated, "Like Ontario's farmers, your government understands that protecting the environment is vital to the future of the family farm. It remains committed to the nutrient management bill, which would protect the environment by setting and enforcing clear, consistent standards for nutrient management on farms."

The Nutrient Management Act was enacted because the time had come for clear, consistent standards that apply province-wide, standards that will relieve the current burden upon municipalities to enter areas where often they lack the proper expertise, standards that will protect the environment and be of benefit to all of us in this province. The act responds to the needs that were identified by farmers, municipalities, environmental groups and others during many consultations over the past two years. The Nutrient Management Act sets out the framework for setting regulations that are specific to different types of nutrients. We are consulting with all stakeholders to develop clear, consistent and stringent standards. These standards will enhance protection of the natural environment while providing a sustainable future for agricultural operations and rural development. The standards being developed under the act will be consistent with Commissioner O'Connor's recommendations. The government's nutrient management strategy will form a significant part of the water protection system envisioned by Commissioner O'Connor.

The Ministry of the Environment will enforce all new standards developed under the act. Dedicated provincial officers will be specifically trained in both environmental and agricultural compliance issues. Most farmers are already excellent stewards and good neighbours of the environment. The Nutrient Management Act provides the framework for making their best practices mandatory and enforceable across Ontario. The Nutrient Management Act also addresses the issues and risks identified in the Environmental Commissioner's special report of July 2000. The report, called *The Protection of Ontario's Groundwater and Intensive Farming*, aligns with the O'Connor report and builds on the government's Smart Growth strategy. Smart Growth is the government's overarching vision for promoting and planning for the growth that we're expecting over the next 20 and 30 years. It's a vision for creating strong economies, building vibrant communities and promoting a healthy environment, and it's as relevant to rural areas and small-town Ontario as it is to the urban centres.

Nutrient management is an important part of our comprehensive strategy to protect groundwater sources. This strategy will also include investments to ensure that municipalities have the information they need to make sound decisions regarding the protection of their groundwater resources. To date, our government has provided local government with over \$14 million to conduct groundwater studies, the largest investment in groundwater source protection in the province's history. A further \$5 million will be provided this year to municipal stakeholders to undertake further work on source protection.

In addition, the government launched the \$6-million provincial groundwater monitoring network in co-operation with Conservation Ontario. Its member authorities and municipalities across the province will provide groundwater quality and quantity monitoring in 38 conservation authorities. To date, over 175 monitoring wells have been installed, and the system is expected to be complete by March 2003.

Furthermore, the government introduced the first conservation-based water-taking regulations in the country on April 30, 1999. This prevents the transfer of water from Ontario's major water basins and ensures conservation issues are thoroughly addressed when reviewing applications for water taking. It is evident that we are more committed than ever, and we are gaining energy with every new announcement. We look forward to implementing Commissioner O'Connor's recommendations on full cost accounting and recovery.

Cleaning up our environment and protecting our valuable sources of drinking water is a non-partisan issue. We must all put aside our political differences in the name of public health. This government understands that issues get resolved not by political wrangling but by consulting with our municipal partners, community leaders, industry and the public at large. We owe it all to—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I'm sorry to interrupt but I'll have to—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Were you done?

**Mr Chudleigh:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I didn't think so. I have to interrupt, though, because it is now 6 o'clock and therefore this House will stand adjourned until 6:45 this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Deputy Clerk / sous-greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	<b>Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)		
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	<b>Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony</b> (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Huron-Bruce	<b>Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen</b> (PC) Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)		
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)		Gerretsen, John (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wetlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Don Valley West / -Ouest	<b>Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre associé de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation	Kitchener-Waterloo	<b>Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth</b> (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Education / vice-première ministre, ministre de l'Éducation
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	<b>Eves, Hon / L'hon Ernie</b> (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	<b>Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W.</b> (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)		
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Leeds-Grenville	<b>Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W.</b> (PC) Minister of Public Safety and Security / ministre de la Sécurité et de la Sécurité publique
Erie-Lincoln	<b>Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim</b> (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	<b>Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne</b> (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)		
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	<b>Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of the Environment, government House leader / ministre de l'Environnement, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)	Markham	<b>Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H.</b> (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement, ministre de la Culture
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	<b>Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda</b> (PC) Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services / ministre des Services à la collectivité, à la famille et à l'enfance	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Mississauga East / -Est	<b>DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl</b> (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)
Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)	Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	<b>Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Nepean-Carleton	<b>Baird, Hon / L'hon John R.</b> (PC) Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs, deputy House leader / ministre de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones, leader parlementaire adjoint	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe-Grey	<b>Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Nipissing	McDonald, AL (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Northumberland	<b>Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug</b> (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oak Ridges	<b>Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank</b> (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	Stoney Creek	<b>Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad</b> (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oakville	<b>Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary</b> (PC) Speaker / Président	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Oshawa	<b>Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J.</b> (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thornhill	<b>Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R.</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa-Orléans	<b>Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	<b>Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet</b> (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Whitby-Ajax	<b>Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	<b>Young, Hon / L'hon David</b> (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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